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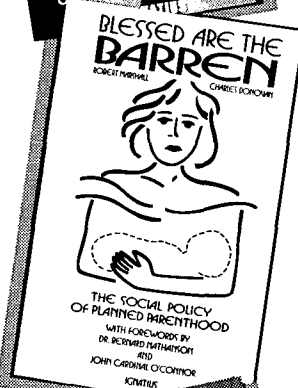
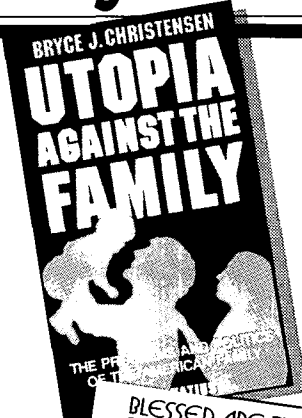
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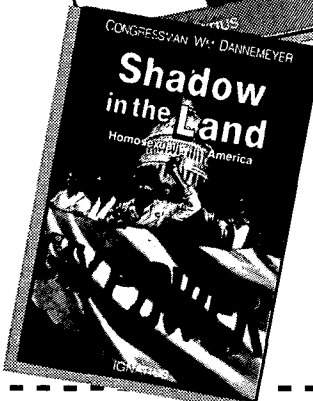
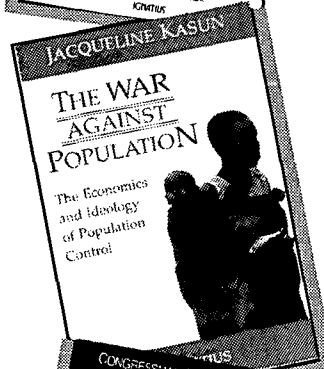
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What are the facts?

■ In order to gain perspective, some thumb-nail history may be in order. Large numbers of Jews have been living in these territories since biblical times – without interruption. Most of the Arabs living there are in fact relative newcomers. "Palestine" is the entire area now covered by Israel, including Judea/Samaria (the so-called "West Bank") and what is now the Kingdom of Jordan. It originally also included the Golan Heights, which later, in an agreement between England and France, were ceded to France, and to Syria as the successor in possession. In 1922, contrary to the requirements of the League of Nations Mandate, the British severed the entire area east of the Jordan River and gave it to the Hashemites as reward for their assistance in World War I. Thus, fully 75% of Palestine, all of which under the Mandate and under the terms of the Balfour Declaration was meant to be a homeland for the Jewish people, was lost for that purpose. Only the area west of the Jordan River was left for Jewish settlement.

■ In 1947, after decades of strife between Arabs and Jews, the British decided that they had enough and announced that they would relinquish the Mandate. The United Nations stepped in and proposed a partition plan under which the country (west of the River) was to be divided into respective Arab and Jewish areas. Jerusalem was to be an internationalized city. The Jews accepted the plan; the Arabs refused it out of hand. In 1948, on the twice truncated territory allot-

ted to them by the United Nations, the Jews declared their independence, and the state of Israel was born. On the same day, six Arab armies invaded the new-born state. In what can be described as an almost biblical miracle, the Jews defeated the six Arab armies. When an armistice was finally secured, however, TransJordan remained in possession of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") and the eastern part of Jerusalem; Egypt remained in possession of the Gaza Strip. TransJordan promptly renamed itself Jordan.

■ Once in possession of the "West Bank" and East Jerusalem, the Jordanians promptly proceeded to expel all Jews and systematically to desecrate and to destroy most Jewish sacred places, cemeteries and houses of worship. No Jews, regardless of whether they were Israelis, Americans or citizens of any other country, were allowed into the "West Bank" or East Jerusalem, the locale of the Western Wall, the holiest site in Judaism. In 1967, Abdel Nasser of Egypt, joined by the same array of Arab armies that had tried to destroy Israel in 1948, launched another war against Israel "to drive the Jews into the sea" and into oblivion, once and for all. The Israelis pre-empted and utterly defeated the combined Arab might in the 6-Day War, one of the greatest military victories in history. When the dust of war settled, the Israelis had not only retained their national territory, but had repossessed (not occupied) the territories of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"), the eastern part of Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and the vast Sinai Peninsula.

It is clear from this abbreviated history that the Israeli claim to the "West Bank" is at least as strong as that of the Arabs. It's only by dint of constant repetition that the world has come to think of these territories as "occupied Arab land". About 100,000 Jews now live in these territories. And why shouldn't they? Why should the Arab countries and the "West Bank" be the only places in the whole wide world where Jews are not allowed to live? How can 100,000 Jews living among 700,000 Arabs be the "greatest threat to peace"? How can Secretary Baker get so exercised and consider a new settlement of a few mobile homes on some barren Judean hills as the "greatest threat to peace", when he seems to be oblivious and totally unconcerned about the unrelenting hostility of the Arab countries, the de facto incorporation of Lebanon by Syria, the Scuds and chemical weapons still remaining in Iraq, and the relentless and ominous build-up of Syria's missile forces?

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Volume 25 Number 5, May 1992
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ABOUT THIS MONTH

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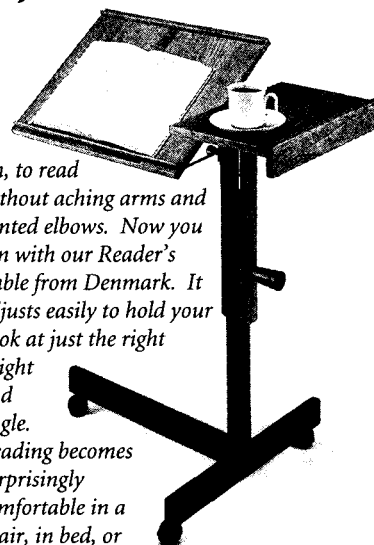
Wladyslaw Pleszczynski

IT'S ENOUGH TO NOTICE the few extra tons of fat Bill Clinton's been carrying of late to be reminded that famous pols are human, too. Or how else to explain Paul Tsongas, who after months of struggle quits while on the verge of victory in Connecticut? More intriguing still, Mikhail Gorbachev confirms that, during last August's Great Terror, Raisa burned all the private correspondence from their college years, ostensibly to destroy evidence of their early passion for perestroika. Again, the student of human nature will suspect that the letters contained infinitely richer insights into their thoughts and activities, however stunted the couple might have been in expressing them. Left to their own devices, men of all stripes put on quite a show, more often than not unwittingly, and this month we bring you a rich array of characters, famous and obscure, exalted and wretched.

IN THE BOOK SECTION, for example, Algis Valiunas's discussion of Peter Tchaikovsky (page 74) is clinched when he introduces the likes of Aleksey Apukhtin, Nikolay Rubinstein, and especially Nadezhda von Meck. Richard Lamb discovers that Evelyn Waugh can be created anew when thrust into the superior company of Lady Diana Cooper (page 72). Francis Rocca can't quite decide who is the most memorable, the twenty-odd scholars depicted in Norman Cantor's study of medieval historiography, or the cantankerous author himself (page 77). On the other hand, reviewers Elizabeth Kristol (page 68), John Podhoretz (page 71), and Amos Blood (page 79) raise pointed questions about writers who can only generalize about human behavior—or refuse to allow for it (another all too human trait, but one that can and must be combated).

ANYONE WHO RIDES the New York subways will have little patience for humanistic outbursts of any sort. But since, Allah be praised, most of us hardly ever have to use them, we are indebted to Edward Conlon, who patrolled the trains for six solid weeks and survived to report (page 29) on humanity in all its stench—and occasional splendor.

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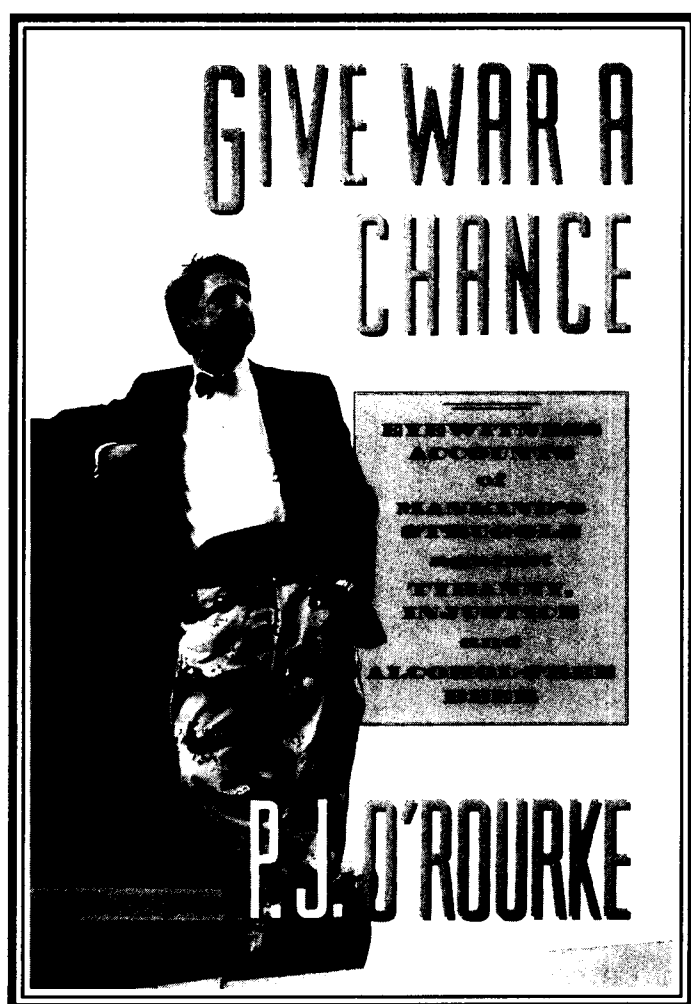
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The Defeat of the Sandinistas:

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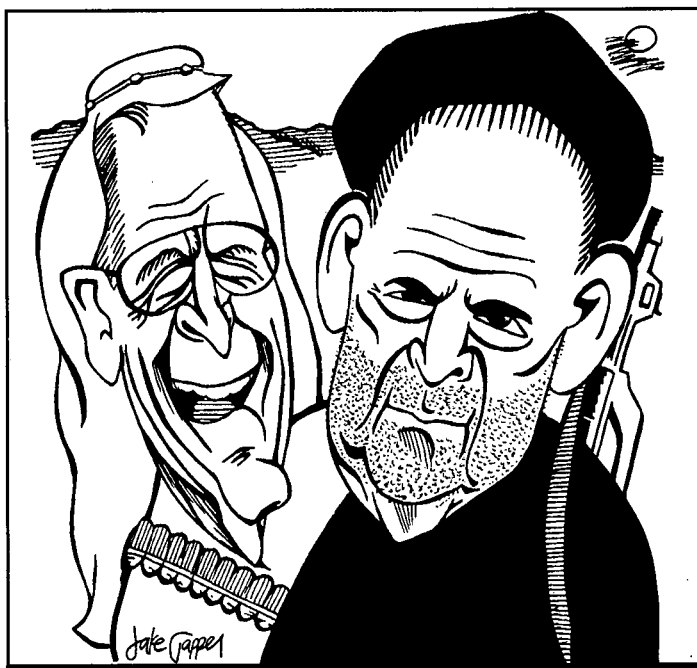


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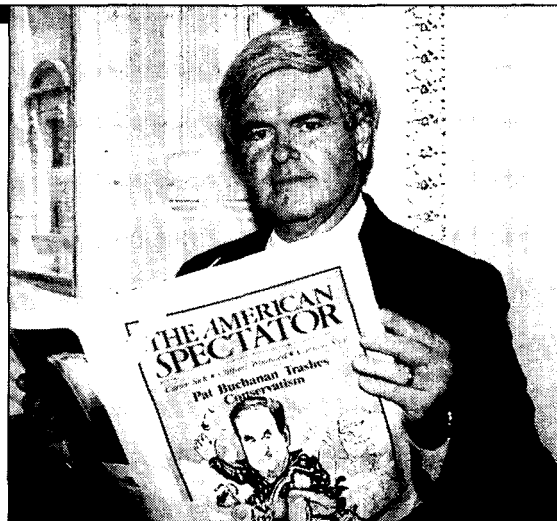
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Cover illustration by John Springs.
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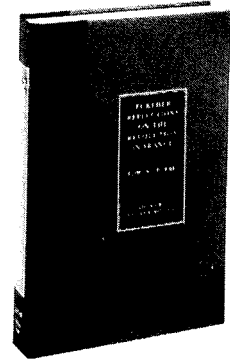
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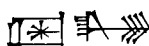
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• As the days of March grew longer, the frosty mists of winter mornings gave way to the bright new dawns of springtime—unlike the presidential primary season, which for all intents won't compete for our attentions for another four years. Ah, but what an unforgettable period of electioneering we witnessed. President Bush made impressive strides when he discovered that "life means nothing without fidelity to principles," which squared nicely with the regrets he issued for having broken his no-new-taxes pledge in 1990. "Listen," he sobbed, "if I had to do that over, I wouldn't do it. Look at all the flak it's taking." We can expect that in time Mr. Bush will apply the same rueful logic to his nomination of Clarence Thomas. Meanwhile, in Gov. Bill Clinton the President has met his match. Early in the month, the Boy Candidate boasted in debate that "no one has done more for civil rights than I have." By month's end the extent of Boy Clinton's contribution to the cause of Martin Luther King was driven home when it was revealed that he regularly golfs at the whites-only Little Rock Country Club. "No one ever complained about it before," he said through a spokesman.

• Against this phenom the other Democrats never had a chance. One by one they surrendered. Sen. Bob Kerrey led his few supporters in a verse from Bruce Springsteen at his sayonara; in keeping with the tenor of his campaign, Sen. Tom Harkin made sure his final remarks fell on deaf ears when he selected Gallaudet University as the site of his withdrawal; pummeled by the Boy in Florida and Texas, Michigan and Illinois, former Sen. Paul Tsongas suspended opera-

tions to near-universal acclaim, the dissenting voice being former Dukakis chairthing Dr. Susan Estrich, a Hillary Clinton clone who kicked at Tsongas's KO'ed remains and hissed that "he didn't have the stomach for the fight." If that's the case, the turning point would have come during the Georgia campaign when Tsongas came across a 15'x10'x6", 700-lb. peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich tastefully displayed in the lobby of Atlanta's Penta Hotel. But not everyone agreed that Tsongas would have paid the Georgia state snack any mind. "He doesn't have a lot of the usual needs," one supporter explained.

• Happily, there is a Massachusetts pol with plenty of the usual needs, and this year he will not be spending Good Friday alone. Sen. Edward Kennedy is to marry Miss Victoria Reggie, 38, sometime before the 1994 Senate campaign and after his father-in-law-to-be, Mr. Edmund Reggie, is cleared of eleven

federal counts of bank fraud. The elder Reggie is a major Democratic presence in Louisiana who brought his kids up right. "Last one in is a Republican!" he would tease as they raced toward the family pool. *Amore* is a going concern in Italian politics as well, where Miss Ilona (Cicciolina) Staller has asked two of her sisters from the soft screen, Miss Virna (Barbarella) Bonino and Miss Luisa (Eva Orlovsky) Pistarino, to join her in a major run for parliament on the Party of Love ticket. Should any of them suffer rejection at the polls, there's always the summer Olympics to look forward to. According to a congress of sports doctors meeting in the Tyrol, women athletes will improve their medal-winning chances with a "turbulent amorous event" before competition.

• Criminal justice continues to show potential as a public spectacle. In Cairo, Judge Gamal Abdel-Halim Hassan has

become the first Egyptian judge to allow television cameras into his courtroom, and now to please advertisers he has sentenced a convicted drug dealer to a hanging "to be carried out in the place where you were caught"—a city street. What with the waywardness of Texas law, the Cairo case may be what moved a child molester nabbed in the streets of Houston to withdraw his request to be castrated in lieu of a prison sentence. Ideally, justice is blind, but don't tell that to Mr. Randall L. Smith, whom a jury in Hillsboro, Oregon, found guilty of murder, even though he sat through his trial with his eyes shut. These days an animal enjoys more rights than a criminal. Mr. James



Loncki, currently of the Gander Hill Prison in Delaware, found out for himself when he was charged with drunk driving, resisting arrest, and punching a police dog in the nose. The mutt's name is Haroon, and he retaliated by biting Loncki on the arm and face, cruel and unusual punishment by Eighth Amendment standards.

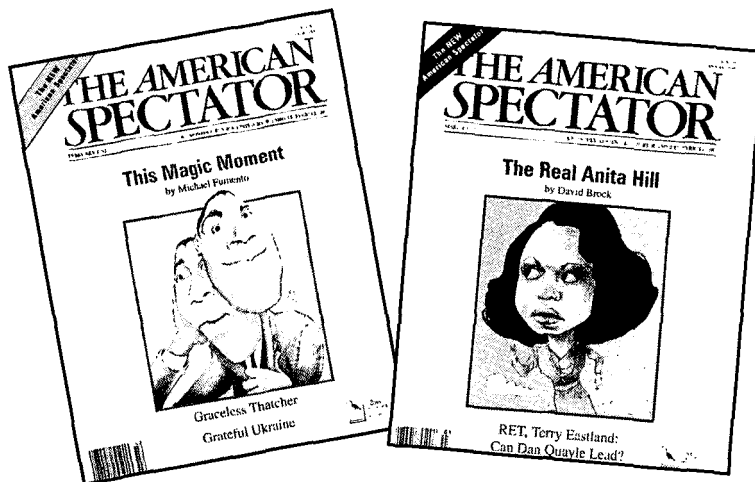
• The outgoing chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, Mr. John Frohnmayer, compared his ouster by President Bush to Munich 1938. Drinking from the jar of Andres Serrano, he practiced uninhibited free expression before the National Press Club: "If the National Endowment for the Arts gets picked off, public broadcasting is next, and after that research funds for universities, and after that research funds for science." By now every last Buchanan supporter was dancing in the streets, and still he would not stop. "There will be no end to it. It's the Sudetenland now, Czechoslovakia next week, and after that Poland." Given an extended NEA grant, Frohnmayer will tell you what came after Poland. *New York Times* columnist and foundation president Mikhail Gorbachev continues to lash out at enemies real and imagined while he perfects his command of moral equivalence: "Decisiveness is regarded in a very primitive fashion, both by you Americans and us Russians," he told the *Washington Post* in an exclusive lecture. "If someone commits himself to reforms . . . that is indecisiveness. But if he moves his tanks into Budapest and wipes away half the city—or invades Grenada and strangles it—that is decisiveness." Mr. Gorby, there'll be no photo-ops for you either on your next visit to the Reagans.

• Mr. Frohnmayer is fond of defending "the voices from the edge." What he doesn't know is that they can thrive without federal backing. For instance, on a cliff overlooking the Pacific, city officials in Santa Cruz, California, unveiled an 18-foot, two-ton bronze monument of a surfer with his board checking out the action on the beach below. Bob's Big Boy restaurant in Toluca Lake, California, is soon to be named a "California Point of Historical Interest," thus preserving forever its 1950s "early coffee shop design." Moreover, important new books are being published without federal subvention, for instance,

Showing Our Colors: Afro-German Women Speak Out, by the University of Massachusetts Press, or *Many Mouthed Birds: Contemporary Writing by Chinese Canadians*, by the University of Washington Press. Meanwhile, private monies are enhancing the prestige of our government-backed organizations, such as the Smithsonian's insect zoo, recently renamed the O. Orkin Insect Zoo after a \$500,000 gift from Orkin Pest Control. Ultimately, it is we the people

who rule, as in Berkeley, California, where the city council has voted to change the name of Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day, or in St. Paul, Minnesota, where on September 16 Mr. Christopher Columbus will be tried in absentia at the University of Minnesota's Human Rights Center on sundry charges stemming from his illegal landing 500 years ago. Come on, John, show a little faith in your country's institutions. —WP

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The Borking of Anita Hill

My wife and I really enjoyed David Brock's article about "The Real Anita Hill" (*TAS*, March 1992). I can assure you that I do not normally compliment people who call me obnoxious, but David's work was so compelling that I just had to say thanks.

I have been faxed and mailed copies of the article and have told people about the article during my speaking engagements. I even tried to purchase your March 1992 issue. Unfortunately, no bookstore or newsstand in the Austin, Texas, or Claremont, California, areas has that issue in stock.

I have two requests and one suggestion. First, please enter a one-year subscription for us to your magazine. Second, please send me a copy of your March 1992 edition so that I can have an original for my files. My suggestion is that you contract with Mr. Brock to do an expanded and updated version of his article and publish it as a separate free-standing pamphlet or as a book. I bet you could sell at least 100,000 copies.

—John N. Doggett, III
Austin, Texas

Desperate for any reasonably articulate printed matter that makes the slightest point in favor of the case of now-Justice Clarence Thomas, relative to the charges of sexual harassment against him by Professor Anita Hill (as well as charges by two other females who worked for Thomas at the EEOC and whom the Senate Judiciary Committee did not hear), I made the consummate one-time-only error of buying your rag for the purpose of reading David Brock's "The Real Anita Hill." Mr. Brock's diatribe, filled with scurrilous innuendo where it was not outright libel, fits into your journal very well, right alongside your musings about Mayor Marion Barry's sex life in prison, a dolphin's masturbation, and the beating to death of a "black" by "whites" in South Africa ("The Continuing Crisis," *TAS*, March 1992). However, both pieces, as well as most of the rest of your publication, would do better under cover of some supermarket tabloid, next to headlines like "Boy Sees With Ears" and "Grandma Has Sex With Alien Creature, Delivers Pup-

pies." . . . Next time I will save my \$2.95 for rental of something with "Long Dong Silver"—it can't be more fictional.

—Mary C. Dunlap, J.D.
San Francisco, California

David Brock has done some industrious spadework in unearthing more information about "The Real Anita Hill," and he makes a plausible, though hardly conclusive, case for interpreting her actions as those of a frustrated professional who wasn't succeeding as well in her career as she had expected or hoped. Interestingly, however, he nowhere makes any reference to the lie-detector test that she took and passed, which of course is not conclusive evidence itself but does suggest that she may, after all, have been telling the truth.

More important, though, than the whole sorry episode involving Anita Hill is the simple fact that Clarence Thomas was pretty clearly not the best qualified candidate President Bush could have found to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court. In fact, he received the lowest rating ever given a Supreme Court nominee by the American Bar Association. Whatever one may think of Robert Bork's politics, there was at least no question about his having a brilliant jurisprudential mind, fully qualifying him to serve on the highest court in our land. Judge Thomas is just not in the same league intellectually.

The truth is that President Bush, despite his denial, chose Judge Thomas first and foremost because of his race, knowing that it would be difficult politically for the Democrats to oppose his nomination. And now what we have is a situation where it is at least conceivable, Brock's argument notwithstanding, that Congress approved the appointment of a Supreme Court justice who has committed perjury—all because we live in an age where "political correctness," if you will, counts more than intellectual merit.

—Sanford G. Thatcher
State College, Pennsylvania

. . . As a former bureau chief for the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* who covered Howard Metzenbaum both in Ohio, when he was a behind-the-scenes political operative, and in Washington, while

U.S. senator, one reference in Brock's article was so totally goofy that I dismiss anything else he has to say.

I refer to Metzenbaum's "cavorting" on Friday nights in Georgetown with a female Brazilian companion. I defy Brock to produce any responsible person to confirm this silly tale. I sure as hell did not agree with all of Metzenbaum's political stands and tactics, but to circulate this personal affront in order to question Metzenbaum's stand on women's issues does not befit what I thought was your responsible publication. Howard Metzenbaum is so cheap that he doesn't know how to cavort with anyone, except maybe with Orrin Hatch or Jesse Helms on the Senate floor at taxpayers' expense. . . .

—Richard G. Zimmerman
Washington, D.C.

Inasmuch as I was on the faculty hiring committee that employed Anita Hill at Oral Roberts University, and subsequently served as her supervisor in my capacity as the last Dean of the ORU Law School, I was impressed with Mr. Brock's work.

On the other hand, I cannot help but resent Mr. Brock's "knee-jerk" reference to the ORU Law School as being "fourth-rate" (see line 14, column 1, page 26). In point of fact, the ORU Law School met every criterion established by the ABA and the state of Oklahoma and turned out some outstanding young lawyers. We had several faculty members who were distinguished in their fields and we did our fair share of publishing in national journals, etc. The only problem that the ABA had with our school was its Christian orientation, and to me that is an accolade, not a criticism.

The ORU Law School was closed for one reason, and one reason only, and that was the financial straits which affected the Oral Roberts Ministry as a whole. All of the students who were in their first and second years at the time of the closing went on to other ABA-accredited law schools, and, from reports reaching me, did as well as—or better than—they had done academically at ORU.

I believe that I am entitled to a public apology from Mr. Brock, as is every grad-

(continued on page 81)

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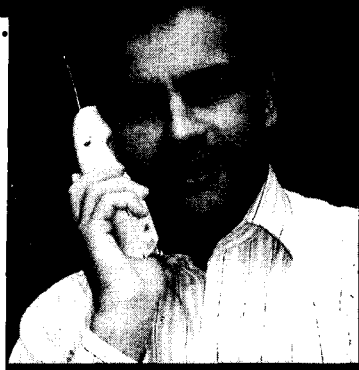
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The Nixon Doctrine

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

History moves abruptly, particularly in Russia. In February of 1917 the Czar's regime, which annually executed a dozen or so political prisoners, was heaved out, and there followed all things bright and beautiful—but only for nine months. Then came Lenin's revolution. He replaced the Czar's secret police force of 15,000 with the Cheka, a force of 250,000, and soon this precursor of the KGB was executing 1,000 people monthly. Eventually whole classes of people were being butchered, not for political mischief but for their occupation or their ancestry. Thus in Russia, after a brief fling with liberty, modern genocide was born.

What will come next from Russia, and how rapidly? Boris Yeltsin is Russia's first freely elected president in a thousand years, and the first Russian leader to encourage market capitalism. He has peacefully supplanted Lenin's despotism, but the beneficiaries of the old despotism remain at large. Some, who stand as living proof that mankind can learn from experience, have chosen democracy over despotism and joined Yeltsin in his attempts to bring prosperity and the rule of law to Russia. Others lurk in the shadows, hoping that inflation, poverty, and social collapse will return them to power.

Almost no national figure in the West speaks of the gravity of the events now taking place in Russia. One of the ironies of our time is that, at the end of the world's most politicized century and at the expiry of a Cold War that once threatened

the very existence of civilization, our political leaders are mostly mediocrities or gaudy frauds. In past decades there were Adenauers, Churchills, DeGaulles, and a fine contingent of Americans in both parties. Today who do we have?

Well, we have—long in the tooth and off on the sidelines—Richard Nixon, who writes in a celebrated memo to friends and foreign affairs associates, "We are at a watershed moment. . . . The historical significance of the democratic revolution in the Soviet Union compares only with events like the defeat of

some have actually chided the man they would replace for paying too much attention to foreign affairs.

Nixon observes that at the end of World War II America was more solicitous of Japan and Germany than it now is of Russia, though the Japanese and the Germans cost us infinitely more in life and treasure. With the utmost urgency he admonishes the gabbling pols of Washington to come to Yeltsin's assistance with temporary humanitarian aid. Nixon prescribes rescheduling the debt incurred by Gorbachev, deferring interest payments, opening Western markets to Russian exports, stabilizing the ruble, creating "a single Western-led organization to assess Soviet needs and coordinate wide-ranging governmental and private aid projects," and creating a "free enterprise corps" to send thousands of Western managers to Russia to pass on "free-market know-how."

On this last point he anticipates one of the most perceptive plans that I have encountered, that of Sergei Grigoriev, a former deputy spokesman for Mikhail Gorbachev and at the height of the Cold War an officer at the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, North American Desk. Grigoriev notes that, though his country has well-trained scientists, engineers, and others, they lack a grasp of economics, commerce, and even civics. Emerging from a totalitarian society until recently sealed off from modernity, his countrymen need a crash course in aspects of modern life that Americans take for granted, e.g., private property, contracts, taxation, and an understanding of how to price a product, market it, and transport it. →



Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815, the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919, and the creation of NATO and the Marshall Plan in 1948." And we have the most pathetic field of presidential candidates in this century, probably in any century. Not one has made even a trifling reference to the momentous events in Russia, and

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Times column syndicated by King Features.

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"Blank checks will kill reform," Grigoriev says. But paying ordinary Americans in need of work to instruct Russians in the elementary tasks of commerce and citizenship is the ticket to getting democratic Russia properly

launched. We have sent some 200 Peace Corps workers into a nation of nearly 200 million. He would send thousands more, for there are plenty of interpreters in Russia to translate this commonplace but vital information. □

and relatively unpowerful rising to power that I can think of in this century involved such dubious saviors as Lenin, Mussolini, and Hitler.

No, I dissent from the popular notion that power and money explain our presidential candidates' lack of substance. To be sure, many foul influences have corroded American presidential politics, but the preeminent cause of today's unspeakable mediocrity must be television, the most baleful invention of the twentieth century. I once thought that award would go to the atomic bomb. Confronted with the colossal infantilism of the present field of presidential contenders and the senselessness of most political commentary, I now believe the idiot box has surpassed the bomb's early promise of annihilation. In our time the buildings still stand and bodies remain intact, but minds seem to be completely gone.

Television trivializes everything it encounters. Its emphasis is on surfaces, images, poses. It encourages sham, quirkiness, and bathos. Television grows impatient with serious discourse. This is not to say that serious discourse was ever a constant in American politics. Such presentations as *The Federalist Papers* or the Lincoln-Douglas debates were splendid anomalies. But television allows no serious political dialogue whatsoever.

It is now a commonplace to complain that political oratory has been condensed into an idiot series of sound bites; but they are today reduced to sound nibbles intoned by all candidates in both parties. "I care," says one candidate, and they all care. "I stand for change," says another and they all do. All are after "the soul of the party," a "new future," "the middle class." Even Pat Buchanan sheds principle for votes, as he warns against "vulture capitalists." Has any conservative presidential challenger ever relied on a sound nibble like that?

And consider the Democrats' front-runner, Boy Clinton. Grinning, uttering inanities, moving fluently from being the Democratic moderate to being the hearty populist, he puts one in mind of nothing more dignified than a game-show host. What was the essence of the complaint against his only plausible opponent, Paul Tsongas? It was his sad-eyed countenance. He is television's latest casualty. □

Video Proliferation

Thanks to Chicago's Milt Rosenberg and his disciplined mind, I have a satisfactory explanation for the general imbecility of the 1992 presidential primaries. Rosenberg is the erudite, thoughtful, and fair-minded host of a fine radio talk show. Owing to that disciplined mind, he had me on the night of the Illinois primary to talk politics not with a former cabinet member on the make, or an unemployed political adviser whom he roomed with in college, or the presidential candidate of the American nudist party, but with a fellow editor of a

political magazine. It made for conversation that was at least coherent and fruitful.

There was a day when radio and television recognized that in the discussion of politics, for instance, those who play different roles see politics from different levels and have different agendas. Consequently political discussions were something other than the incoherent cacophony of shouts, grunts, and whines we now have. Generally speaking, not much coherent thought is going to come from a conversation that mixes a failed female politician in with a political hack, a political reporter, and me, a polemicist from a political journal. I participated in such a disorderly drama not long ago and it was as senseless as a film discussion involving a screen writer, a producer, two drunken actors, and a dozen stage hands.

Rosenberg knows better, and the other night while Mayor Daley's workers were making the rounds of the Cook County cemeteries to assure that every corpse had cast a vote, Rosenberg asked the editor of the conservative *American Spectator* and the editor of the left-wing *Progressive*, Erwin Knoll, why we both found this campaign so underwhelming.

Erwin, ever the repository of all that palms itself off as radical and enlightened, explained that the problem with American presidential politics is money and power. Here is irony for you. Erwin scorns the vacuity of all the presidential candidates (save, perhaps, Jerry Brown), though every one of the candidates is at one with Erwin in admonishing against the corrupting influence of power and money. Actually, of course, there is no country on earth where the unpowerful and penurious have occasion to run for president of anything, and there never will be. The only instances of the poor

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—General George S. Patton, Jr.





Heretic

by Tom Bethell

“**H**eretic” is a much admired category in contemporary liberal thought—provided the heretic in question is safely dead. (Galileo comes to mind.) The other day I went to hear a live one, who was giving a lecture to students at the University of California in Berkeley. His name is Peter Duesberg. Born in Germany in 1936, he is a professor of molecular and cell biology at the university, and a member of the National Academy of Sciences. He has been a pioneer in cancer-gene research, and was the first to map the genetic structure of retroviruses. His heresy—a whopper—is his claim that the human immunodeficiency virus, HIV, is benign and does not cause AIDS.

In a recent (1992) article published in *Biomedicine and Pharmacotherapy*, Duesberg summarizes a mass of data as follows: “It is concluded that all American AIDS exceeding the normal low incidence of indicator diseases in the general population is the result of recreational and anti-HIV drugs. Thus the American AIDS epidemic is a subset of the drug epidemic.”

Dwinnelle Hall, on the Berkeley campus near Sproul Plaza, was packed with about 400 students, mostly pre-med. Perhaps three-fourths of the audience were Oriental—very earnest and undecipherable. The city of Berkeley is still a bastion of socialism, but the campus is now far from it. A German film crew was rolling when Duesberg came to the podium—a slim, bespectacled figure with silvery hair and an open-neck shirt. His voice was in the alto range.

“I came today,” he started out, “to advance an hypothesis, which holds that

AIDS is not infectious, but is in fact a consequence of drug consumption and AZT consumption, which is given as an antiviral drug to a lot of antibody-positive persons and AIDS patients. This hypothesis explains the total failure—and I emphasize the total failure—of the virus-AIDS hypothesis in terms of public health benefits. It was predicted by Margaret Heckler and by the National Institutes of Health that it would explode into the heterosexual population, which has yet to occur; that women would get AIDS, which has yet to occur; that teenagers would get AIDS, and that hasn’t occurred. It also explains the failure to come up with a vaccine, and the failure to come up with a drug against the virus; and it explains why, despite spending \$3 billion a year, more than we have spent on all viruses in history combined, we have yet to save the first life. In fact, I will submit to you that we are doing just the opposite. We are about to help 120,000 people die, by giving them AZT.”

He said that Kimberly Bergalis, the young Florida woman supposedly infected by her dentist, tested positive for HIV and had a yeast infection, and was therefore diagnosed as an AIDS patient. (The Centers for Disease Control defines AIDS as any one of twenty-five conventional diseases in the presence of HIV antibody.) “The most serious consequence for her was that she was treated with AZT, and she died a year later,” Duesberg said. He described AZT as a “DNA chain terminator” that will kill cells that incorporate it. Since only one in 8,000 cells of the immune system is ever infected by HIV, and then harmlessly, Duesberg claims, using AZT to kill the virus is like poisoning the drinking water of an entire village in order to kill one lurking (but in fact harmless) terrorist. He said that most people who take AZT

will die from it; a fortunate percentage do not effectively absorb it, he said. He told me later that he had tried to get word to Magic Johnson not to take AZT, but didn’t know whether he had been able to penetrate the shield of managers that surround these top athletes.

For years Duesberg was supported by an “outstanding investigator” grant from the NIH, but this was recently not renewed. Without alternative funds, it will be difficult for him to maintain his lab. (His original grant encouraged him to “venture into new territory,” but the letter of termination complained about “the dilution of his efforts with non-scientific issues.”) “It was a sanction, clearly,” Duesberg says. “NIH couldn’t say, ‘Here’s one of our star scholars and he’s saying we are wasting \$3 billion on HIV research.’”

Duesberg has been compared to a flat-earthier, and Robert Gallo, the NIH virologist whose alleged co-discovery of HIV (along with Luc Montagnier of the Pasteur Institute in Paris) has been under investigation for fraud (it seems that Gallo’s lab reproduced the sample sent from Paris and then claimed independent discovery of it), says he “cannot respond [to Duesberg] without shrieking.” Michael Fumento, author of *The Myth of Heterosexual AIDS*, goes so far as to accuse Duesberg of bad faith. “I think he has to know he’s wrong,” Fumento says. “It’s a big game with this guy, and I don’t think this is very funny.”

Charles A. Thomas, Jr, formerly professor of biochemistry at Harvard, recently organized the “Group for the Scientific Reappraisal of the HIV/AIDS Hypothesis,” supporting Duesberg. About forty-five people, mostly scientists and doctors, and four of Duesberg’s colleagues at Berkeley (a virologist and a cell biologist among them), have called

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator’s Washington correspondent and a media fellow at the Hoover Institution.

for a "thorough reappraisal of the evidence for and against HIV." Their four-sentence letter calling for this reappraisal has been rejected by the major medical and scientific journals.

I can't do justice here to the many points that Duesberg makes against the virus hypothesis. (For those who would like more detail, I recommend an article by Duesberg and Bryan Ellison in *Policy Review*, Summer 1990; with replies, Fall 1990.) The established view—since 1984—is that HIV attacks the immune system, specifically T-helper cells. Duesberg agrees that *something* is depleting the immune system. The prevalence of "opportunistic" diseases—caused by ubiquitous but normally harmless microbes—ensures that this must be so. But immune-system failure cannot be blamed for some AIDS diseases, notably dementia (the immune system doesn't reach the brain).

Although HIV is supposedly deadly, scientists can barely find the elusive virus in AIDS patients. As a rule, only the antibody can be detected (which is why an antibody test is used). But antibodies normally indicate that the body's Defense Department has done its job, neutralizing the invaders. This seems to be true with HIV. Chimpanzees infected with HIV haven't come down with AIDS.

On the wall of his lab in Stanley Hall, Duesberg has a glossy poster depicting the dreaded virus, on which he has written: "First virus to kill without biochemical activity! First virus to kill 50-100% of its carriers! First virus to kill only after antiviral immunity! First virus to be co-discovered a year after its discovery!" The latency period of HIV has been steadily increased (now said to be ten years or more) evidently to account for the failure of reported AIDS cases to match CDC projections. (There were supposed to be 270,000 cases by the end of 1991. In fact, there were 202,000.)

Duesberg attacked at the level of virology (what is visibly happening in the microscope); Federal Science countered with correlations. Can't you see, the NIH-men said, that all these people who come down with AIDS show up positive when tested for HIV? And that, when they do not have HIV, they do not have

AIDS? But this is an artifact of definition: AIDS is defined as known diseases in the presence of HIV. It's an attempt to unify disparate phenomena under one heading and identify a single cause; a "heroic hypothesis," says Duesberg, on the part of virologists "who have not been able to place any of their viruses as a human pathogen" and "would like nothing better than to be clinically relevant at some time in their career."

In as many as 50 percent of AIDS cases, Duesberg says, the HIV test was never reported, the "positive" diagnosis being presumptive. There have been enough HIV-negative cases of Kaposi's sarcoma in homosexuals to set the virologists looking for a completely different (non-HIV) cause. By CDC logic, Kaposi's should by now have been stricken from the AIDS list. Duesberg believes he knows what caused Kaposi's: the (formerly) widespread use of amyl-nitrite inhalants ("poppers") in the homosexual bathhouses. This use declined when homosexuals themselves recognized their danger, and the incidence of Kaposi's has since declined likewise.

HIV is supposed to be new, but it is not spreading in the susceptible population as is to be expected of such a virus. Army blood tests and blood bank surveillance show that, since 1985, the HIV-positive percentage of the tested population has remained constant at 0.03 percent, and equally distributed between the sexes. Yet AIDS has remained overwhelmingly confined to two groups: intravenous drug-users and male homosexuals. Why is this, at a time of sexual promiscuity and rising venereal disease? Duesberg says that drugs themselves suppress the immune system, and that many "bathhouse" homosexuals use drugs. In the course of their numerous encounters they pick up what's going around, including HIV and a lot of other viruses. Same with the junkies. But HIV itself is a harmless "hitchhiker." It's there but it isn't doing anything.

One-third of U.S. AIDS patients admit to using intravenous drugs. But the figure is surely underreported because the drugs are illegal. "This group includes about 75 percent of the heterosexual AIDS cases, and 71 percent of the females with AIDS," Duesberg says. Of the homosexual AIDS cases (60 percent of the total), Duesberg said in his lec-

ture: "It is a minority of homosexuals who are at risk," and he cited a recent NIH study of 3,916 homosexuals, 83 percent of whom reported they had used one drug with sex in the past six months, and sixty percent of whom reported that they had used two or more drugs with sex. These drugs included nitrites ("classical mutagens," Duesberg added), cocaine, amphetamines, methaqualone, lysergic acid (LSD), phenylcyclidine, and more. AIDS is new because bathhouses and the drug epidemic are new. "Over 72 percent of American AIDS cases are 20 to 44 year-old males, although no AIDS disease is male-specific, because males of this age-group consume over 80 percent of all hard psychoactive drugs."

Homosexual activists seem hypnotized by drugs. When Duesberg tells them not to take AZT, they say: "What drugs should we take?" And of course the medical establishment lives by drugs. Duesberg is amazed by the profession's nonchalance here. In the newsletter *Full Context* (Royal Oak, Michigan), he told Karen Reedstrom: "We never hear that drugs are bad for our health. We're only supposed not to use them because this is somehow too much fun, I assume. We're told to use 'clean needles' by the AIDS doctors, but we're never told not to use drugs. It's a very strange message that the AIDS caretakers are sending out. When you say use 'clean needles' that implies that it's okay to take drugs; make sure your injection equipment is clean." Or, as Duesberg told me: "The message is 'Drugs without bugs.'"

Duesberg's drug message has been unpopular with an establishment that is supposedly waging a war on drugs. At one point, he concedes, he was naive enough to think he might receive a congratulatory phone call from Washington for pointing to the danger of drugs. But of course he hasn't. In his lecture to the Berkeley students, he suggested why not. "Politically," he said, "it's not very correct to say drugs caused your disease. Because essentially you tell people you are to blame yourself, and you are responsible for your health. A virus is a much more popular, politically more attractive pathogen, because it is God-given and egalitarian, and no one can be blamed for it." □



The Fall of the House of Windsor

*Will the British monarchy survive the fortieth anniversary
of Queen Elizabeth's accession?*

by Stuart Reid

London

If Her Majesty occasionally looks glum, perhaps even sour, it is because she has every reason to. After forty years on the throne, Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith, and many other good things besides, finds her subjects in a surly mood, her family breaking up, and her kingdom divided by resurgent nationalism and the longest election campaign since 1964 (when Labour won). The fortieth anniversary of her accession, which fell in February, was marred by an outbreak of republicanism in the press. There is likely to be more of it as the year progresses. The anniversary pageant comes this autumn, and already there has been much curling of fastidious lips at the news that the music for it is to be composed by Andrew Lloyd Webber. And that's just this year. On yonder distant horizon, like a monstrous desert sun at dawn, stands the brooding, feisty figure of Ms. Kitty Kelley, whose book on the House of Windsor is awaited here with lively interest. They're on their guard at Buckingham Palace.

Her Majesty's present round of sorrows began in January with publication of *Royal Fortune: Tax, Money and the Monarchy*, by Phillip Hall, which casts an unfriendly eye over the royal tax privilege (the privilege being that the Queen does not pay tax). The book was serialized in the (right-wing) *Sunday Times*. In the (right-wing) weekday *Times*, meanwhile, Janet Daley attacked the Queen in an article headed "An Enemy of the People." And in the (right-wing) *London Evening Standard*, the novelist A.N. Wilson put a compelling case for a republic. "It would only take an unfortunate skiing accident,"

he wrote, "to give us King Andy and Queen Fergie."

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Television joined in. On the ITV program "This Week," the Queen was berated for not being an equal-opportunity employer. Out of the 890 royal employees, apparently, only nine are drawn from ethnic minorities. Here is an injustice that does not cause many of us to lose sleep, but it matters to John Grigg (formerly a Tory, now a Liberal Democrat), who said on "This Week" that the Queen was personally to blame. This was not the first time Grigg had abandoned himself to *lèse-majesté*. In 1957, when he was plain Lord Altrincham (he disclaimed his title in 1963), he reproached the Queen for sounding like a "priggish schoolgirl." A loyal subject, goaded beyond endurance by this affront to his monarch, punched Grigg in the nose outside the offices of Independent Television News. The incident was duly filmed.

Grigg is not, as it happens, a republican. Nor are most Britons. Sixteen million of us watched "Elizabeth R," the TV documentary transmitted as part of the anniversary celebrations. The Queen is popular. The people have confidence in her. Even republicans allow that she carries herself well and is kind to animals. The Prince of Wales, too, inspires loyalty, but not confidence. He is a loose cannon. When he pleases one group, he invariably displeases another. Reactionary industrialists rage against his views on the environment, progressive architects against his views on modern architecture. In defiance of all the rules of our unwritten constitution, he expresses political opinions. Not long ago he spoke warmly of proportional representation, outraging the Tories, who are implacably opposed to it, but gratifying the Liberal Democrats. He has also dared politicians to use the word "soul" in ordinary discourse, which might be seen as putting unfair pressure on MPs who are also members of the British Humanist Association. Who knows, anyway, what he means by soul? Sometimes he seems to be a decent, tweed-jacketed, churchgoing blighter, sometimes a New Age nut. There is certainly something reassuring about a man who talks to his plants. Perhaps, though, we might be more reassured if he were also to talk to his wife, the beautiful and blameless Diana.

Here we come to the nub of the matter. Charles and Diana go their separate ways. Their problem is not that they cannot communicate, but that they will not. When, occasionally, they meet, their conversation no doubt sounds like something from one of Harold Pinter's more elliptical pieces. The indifference that set in after the honeymoon years has now, they say, been replaced by something that is beginning to resemble loathing. According to a former member of the Waleses' household: "You very quickly learn to choose whose side you are on—his or hers. There

is no middle course." We must face the truth: Charles and Diana are unlikely to grow old gracefully and in harmony, like Krystle and Blake. That bodes ill for the future.

Charles and Diana were put on the back burner in March when it was discovered that Fergie and Andy, otherwise the Duchess and Duke of York, were to separate. We've been here before. In 1989, the Princess Royal separated from Captain Mark Phillips (a divorce seems likely). In 1978, the marriage of Princess Margaret and Lord Snowdon ended in divorce. Fergie's parents were divorced, as were Diana's. Of the Queen's four children only Prince Edward finds himself without marital difficulties, but then he's not married. His problem seems to be that he can't form a stable relationship, though why that should stop him from getting married remains a mystery.

News of the Yorks' separation was greeted here with the sort of long-faced, watery-eyed solemnity that always accompanies an outbreak of mass Schadenfreude. The Duke and Duchess are unpopular. Besides, nothing could be finer, in the middle of a monumentally dull election campaign, than to have a constitutional crisis to fill the news pages.

The crisis had been brewing for two months. Although little had been seen of the Duke since he appeared naked—save for a superimposed fig-leaf crown—in the center pages of the *Sun* last summer, the Duchess had been continually in the news since January, when it emerged that she had been

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engaging in an unsuitable friendship with Steve Wyatt, the Texas millionaire who, according to the tabloids, is also the "son of a drug-crazed killer." The closeness of their friendship came to light in January when a cleaning lady discovered holiday snaps of the two of them in a flat once occupied by Wyatt. Andy was furious.

What followed was bizarre even by the exacting standards of the House of Windsor. The first thing Fergie did was to fly off to Florida to do penance, or at least to pick up £15,000 on behalf of the British Motor Neurone Disease Association. She grabbed a photo opportunity at Connor Nursery in West Palm Beach, where she cuddled what the royalist *Sunday Express* called an "AIDS miracle tot." As the photographs showed, the miracle tot was black; there is no point in doing these things by halves. Later, however, Fergie squandered her Brownie points by attending a gathering at a club that does not serve blacks (or Jews), even if they have AIDS.

Then, on the flight home, the Duchess made strange bird-like noises, imitated a telephone, pulled a plastic bag over her head, stuck her tongue out at other passengers and threw bread rolls at them. What can have got into her? Speculation that she might have taken cocaine must be discounted, not least on logistical grounds. Besides, her ani-

mated behavior was apparently not unusual. The most likely explanation for it is that she had fallen victim to a heady mixture of fatigue and high spirits. Insiders insist that she does not need the help of drugs, or booze, to behave in a thoroughly deranged manner.

Back in England, Fergie continued to act oddly. She consulted Madame Vasso, a middle-aged Greek hypnotherapist and palm reader who treats people for cancer and "lumps" and drug problems. She does other things, too, like give interviews to the press. Fergie visited her at her apartment in a run-down part of North London and, in a room dominated by (what else?) a large, blue Perspex pyramid, was treated for pains in the back and the neck, apparently caused by tension. "I put my hands on her back and she said she could feel the heat," said Madame Vasso. "She kept her clothes on." Later, the Palace decided that Madame Vasso did not have the gravitas required in a royal physician—last year she was bound over to keep the peace after being charged with common assault—and Fergie stopped seeing her.

Who would swap places with the Duchess of York? To the tension pains in her back and neck must be added the weight problem that has plagued her off and on since she married Andy and became the tabloids' Public Enemy Number One. Might she become the first member of the royal family (or the first ex-daughter-in-law of the Queen) to join a 12-step program? Anything is possible, not to say likely. The last thing the Queen needs is another divorce in the family. For one thing, she is Supreme Governor of the Church of England, and therefore spiritual mother of the nation; for another, the upper middle classes—who, along with swooning expat Americans and jumped-up insurance salesmen, are the monarchy's best friends—might not stand for it.

The UMCs are only human, after all. Behind their Ralph Lauren exteriors beat hearts of purest dross. Now that the recession is biting hard in the Home Counties, they must be wondering why the royals should go on having all the fun

when they are having to cancel their winter holidays in the Caribbean. What is now a minor irritation could turn to boiling resentment if a high-taxing Labour government came to power. In that event the Queen's tax privilege would no longer be something to shrug off, a subject of concern only to polytechnic riffraff. Chances are it would become a political issue among affluent Tories; that is, a very serious issue indeed. When the politics of envy hits the Home Counties, it is time for the royal family to count its spoons and lower its profile.

Even the Tories, therefore, cannot indefinitely ignore the royal tax question. The apparent injustice is just too great for a social democracy to live with. The Queen is the richest person in Britain. Her fortune is estimated, by *Fortune*, at

£5.1 billion. She receives £7.9 million a year from the state in the form of a Civil List, and out of this is supposed to pay for the royal household. She does indeed pay some of her own and her family's bills—the Duke of York, for example, gets an allowance of £250,000 a year—but the state picks up the tab for the royal yacht (£9.2 million a year), the Queen's flight (£6.7 million), the royal train (£2.3 million), and the royal palaces and residences (£25.7 million). Taking these and other expenses into account, the cost of the monarchy is £57 million a year. Meanwhile the Queen's private income continues to grow. According to Phillip Hall's *Royal Fortune*, Her Majesty has £341 million in stocks; if she were taxed on the divi-

dends she would be paying the Exchequer more than £7 million a year.

No right-minded conservative could object to keeping the royal family in the manner to which it has grown accustomed—unless the royal family were seen not to be serving the interests of the nation. As Walter Bagehot wrote in *The English Constitution*: "There are arguments for not having a Court and there are arguments for having a splendid Court; but there are no arguments for having a mean Court."



In the Thatcher years, however, arguments began to be heard on the right for no Court. They were based on the feeling that the Queen was actually working against the interests of the government. Mrs. Thatcher's admirers put the word out that the Queen was privately criticizing some of No. 10's gung-ho policies. In 1986 the *Sunday Times* reported that the Queen was unhappy about the way the miners' strike had been handled (i.e., with mounted police and baton charges); that she had "misgivings" about the Libyan bombing; and that she believed Mrs. Thatcher lacked compassion for the underprivileged. The story was subsequently denied, but the feeling remained in some New Right quarters that the Queen was not, in Mrs. Thatcher's expression, "one of us."

That was evidently the view of Brian Micklethwait, of the Libertarian Alliance, who, again in 1986, caused a sensation when he suggested, in *Economic Affairs*, that the royal family should be privatized. His suggestion might not have excited much, or any, indignation had it not been for the fact that the magazine it appeared in is the journal of the Institute of Economic Affairs, a Thatcherite think tank. Right-wing republicanism was now securely on the agenda.

For the past ten years the *Sunday Times* has led the republican way. Last February, at the height of the Gulf war, it ran an editorial strongly attacking the younger members of the royal family for their frivolous behavior while our lads were facing possible death: "... on the home front, too many of the young royals and their entourages carry on regardless with their peacetime lifestyles, parading a mixture of upper-class decadence and insensitivity which disgusts the public and demeans the monarchy."

Chippy talk of upper-class decadence naturally does not play well in High Tory circles. In the *Sunday Telegraph*, in an article headed "Not Long to Reign Over Us," Peregrine Worsthorne horsewhipped the republican right: in the old days, he wrote, it was the Communists who threatened the

existing order; nowadays it was Rupert Murdoch (owner of the *Times* newspapers) and those in the Conservative party who shared Murdoch's prejudices. But there was a twist. Worsthorne argued that by allowing itself to be popularized, and therefore trivialized, the royal family was to blame for its own misfortunes and for the fact that the monarchy's prospects had seldom seemed bleaker. Thus even High Tories yield to *lèse-majesté*, if only by being more regal than the royal family.

One thing that excites particular disgust among High Tories—and here they find themselves in bed with the New Right—is the Queen's sentimental attachment to the Commonwealth. The British Commonwealth of Nations is an organization that has nothing to offer the

world but, at best, wittering banalities (*vide* Brian Mulroney) and, at worst, base tyranny (*vide* Daniel arap Moi). As head of the Commonwealth, of course, the Queen is duty-bound to be civil to Commonwealth leaders, even if they are Australians. Yet she is more than civil, she is adoring. Like Mrs. Kinnock, she loves the Commonwealth, especially its Third World members, and the Commonwealth loves her. Since the war, the Queen of England has done as much as any practicing liberal (Jimmy Carter and Willy Brandt included) to promote Third World humbug.

It is all so demeaning for her subjects. It is absurd, too. Royal-

ists would argue, with some justification, that there is bound to be absurdity when the monarch is tied to the consensus, as Queen Elizabeth is in the case of the Commonwealth. But the monarchy is quite capable of being absurd without at the same time being fashionable. Consider: the Queen inherited her most resounding title, Defender of the Faith, from Henry VIII. The title, which appears on our coins to this day, was bestowed upon Henry by Pope Leo X in recognition of the king's treatise against Protestantism. The faith Henry defended was thus the Catholic faith. The faith the Queen defends, as the Supreme Governor of the



Church of England, is the Protestant faith. Only in England.

Here's a further complication. Protestantism has lost some of its allure for the Queen's consort, the Duke of Edinburgh, who, we learn, is "rediscovering" his Greek Orthodox roots. Although the Duke converted to Anglicanism in 1947, when he married the future Supreme Governor of the Church of England, he now seems to be more impressed by the faith of his fathers than by the faith of his wife. Is this because he has mulled over the ancient texts and decided that Orthodoxy was right not to include the *filioque* clause in the Creed? Apparently not. What attracts him about Orthodoxy is that it is hierarchical and (more to the point, surely) less "sluggish" than Anglicanism in its response to environmental issues. The Duke is president of the World Wide Fund for Nature (previously the World Wildlife Fund) and is a militant enthusiast for family planning. Martin Palmer, his adviser on ecology and religious affairs, says that the Duke is not intending to leave the Church of England. But what is there to leave?

Defending the faith, or supremely governing the Church of England, is one of the monarch's principal *raison d'être*. But there are only 1.8 million active Anglicans in a population of 55 million. The failure of the Established Church is not the Queen's fault. The Anglican revolution, like the French and the Russian revolutions, has run its course. Last year, Gorbachev found that he had no party left to lead. Pretty soon the Queen will find that she has no faith/Church left to defend. This is no longer an Anglican, far less a Christian, state.

If indeed it is a state at all. The old constitutional formulas—for example, that sovereignty is vested in the Queen in Parliament—are no longer convincing. Her Majesty's Government has been busy these past twenty years surrendering its sovereignty to Brussels, in effect

making Her Majesty redundant. Of course, being redundant does not mean you are out of a job. On the other hand, a sovereign monarch needs a sovereign territory—a state—over which to preside. A head of state without a state is in a pretty pickle. Now there is another consideration. The Scottish Nationalists are on the march; so are the Welsh; and even in England, traditional hub of empire, there are stirrings of nationalism. The United Kingdom is not united. Can the monarchy survive the twin challenges of resurgent nationalism and European federalism? Those who believe it can point to the success of the so-called democratic monarchies on the Continent. But they never

were monarchies in the British sense, never big dollar-earners. Can anyone imagine Queen Elizabeth getting on a bicycle, like Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands, and going shopping at Sainsbury's? Great Britain is a nuclear power, for crying out loud. It's all or nothing for the British people, and as the events of 1776 serve to remind us, republicanism is in our blood.



The fall of the Berlin Wall took us all by surprise. So too, if it should come to that, will the fall of the House of Windsor. If Europe does not bring it down, then presumably the job will be done by a sudden constitutional crisis, an abdication

perhaps, or another divorce, or even a change of religion. With brooding Charles and bubbly Diana there are endless permutations and possibilities. On this reading, at any rate, it will all be over in a moment. The Queen, or her successor, will have to try to get by on £5.1 billion, and the former United Kingdom will have to choose a head of state. The only losers will be the tabloids. Since the war, the royal family has been the British substitute for Hollywood. When the monarchy goes, the tabloids will have to rely on Hollywood alone for their soap. Let's hope Hollywood can keep up the supply. We need our cakes and ale. □

Christopher Caldwell

Smoke Gets in Your Eyes

But it probably doesn't give you cancer, despite what the EPA says.

Proving dangers to non-smokers from “environmental tobacco smoke” (ETS, or “passive smoke”) has not been easy for anti-smoking activists. While every nag in every airport waiting room complains about her “smoke allergy,” no study has ever established allergenic properties in tobacco smoke. While children have been shown to be sensitive to ETS, it has long been known that children are more sensitive to *anything* in the air, from rag-

weed to dust, and most people would grant to parents, not the state, the responsibility to keep them away from pollutants. Attempts to link heart disease to ETS have not borne fruit. And in 1986, a Yale University medical school study of asthmatics exposed to ETS showed that not only did the smoke not cause any acute respiratory risk—it actually decreased bronchial constriction.

“Even with the ‘rigged jury’ of standard statistical procedures,” wrote Dr. Kevin Dowd in the June 1991 issue of the British journal *Economic Affairs*, “it turns out, contrary to popular myth, that there is still no convincing evidence in favour of the adverse effects of passive smoking.” Yet, a year previous to that, the EPA, having failed in its attempts to establish clear-cut and readily confirmable proof of the



harms of ETS, had used a complicated and irregular scientific route to claim a minimal link. Patching together spousal studies, the EPA claimed that women married to smokers were 1.28 times as likely to contract lung cancer—and that ETS was to blame. The EPA leaked a draft risk assessment describing environmental tobacco smoke as a “known human carcinogen.” The months since have seen anti-smoking activists calling for more legislation in public

places, and tobacco interests and libertarians pointing out gaps in what they say is dishonest and politicized science.

Exposure to environmental tobacco smoke is difficult to measure by increments. First of all, although irresponsible scientists have tried, one can't extrapolate lung cancer risk from the dosages active smokers take into their lungs. For one, the substances are chemically and quantitatively different: “active” tobacco smoke is made up of smoke particles—and plenty of them—while “passive” smoke is highly diluted, with a partially vaporous content. In addition, “active” smokers take deep breaths through their mouths and hold the smoke in their lungs. “Passive” smokers breathe largely through the nose, which filters out impurities.

While blood tests and urine samples do show that non-smokers absorb nicotine from the smokers around them, it

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is in such small doses that this can be seen as a triumph more for modern scientific calibration than for any cause-and-effect relationship. It's rather like remarking that every cubic foot of ocean water contains ash from Mount Pinatubo, or that almost all of the paper money in Miami contains traces of cocaine—it's true, impressive, and meaningless. In real-life settings, the dangers of particulates are even less impressive. A 1978 study in the *International Archives of Occupational Environmental Health* claimed that it would take 11 to 50 hours in an extremely smoke-polluted environment to absorb as much nicotine as a smoker takes in from one cigarette. In Britain, where smoking was legal on subway trains until the mid-1980s and was until recently permitted on buses, the Freedom Organization for the Right to Enjoy Smoking Tobacco estimated that one would have to ride in the smoking section of a bus for four-and-a-half weeks to be exposed to one cigarette's worth of nicotine.

It's possible to measure the "respirable suspended particles" that surround a smoker, but very difficult to distinguish them from other particles that may be in the air from cooking, rug fibers, car exhaust, air-conditioning, etc. Pro-smoking activists like to mention "sick building syndrome" as a major contributor. At first glance, calling poor ventilation a "syndrome" and a health threat appears as hysterical as using the word "choc-a-holic" to claim that the science-fictionesque terrors that afflict the true addict apply to someone who is basically a glutton. But the 1976 Legionnaires' disease outbreak is a sick-building incident that cost twenty-nine lives, and occupational studies tend to bear the pro-smokers out: in only 2 to 4 percent of indoor air quality problems is tobacco smoke the major culprit.

How much particulate matter enters the air due to smoking? Anti-smoking activists would have us believe a tremendous amount. Dr. David Burns, testifying before the Los Angeles City Council Health Committee, argued that particulates, "when smoking is allowed, [increase] about ten-fold from the background levels." This is simply falsehood in the service of anti-smoking propaganda—a 1990 study of smoking sections in forty-one restaurants showed that only half of the particulates were from smoke; another study, from 1988, put the figure at 28 percent. As far as eating in restaurants is concerned, the cuisine might be as much of a risk as the smoke; a 1987 Shanghai study by Dr. Y.T. Gao and three researchers from the National Cancer Institute found that nonsmoking women who cooked with rapeseed oil had an incidence of lung cancer 2.5 times as high as those who cooked with soybean oil.

Given the ineffectiveness of exposure measurements, re-

searchers have sought a link in epidemiological studies, i.e. studies based on the incidence of affliction across large populations. Here is what the thirty studies that have been conducted to date report: twenty-four show no statistically significant link at all; six show a weak link; nine show that being married to a smoker actually *decreases* one's chance of contracting lung cancer.

One would think that a combined study—showing ETS exposure from all sources, including the work environment, and including other smoking family members—would show a clearer relationship. Yet no combined study has ever shown a statistically significant association. Even shoddier is the failure of most of the lung cancer tests to probe cancers histologically—that is, by sampling for oncogens in cells of the infected organs. Only limited histology was done even in the large and influential 1981 Hirayama study from Japan, which is the cornerstone of the ETS/cancer scare. As everyone knows, cancer metastasizes, and failure to distinguish between cancers that originated in the lungs and those that moved there from another organ makes the figures considerably "softer." The Hirayama study also relied on question-

naires, which made no attempt to determine which non-smokers were ex-smokers.

Then there is the question of confounding factors, like Dr. Gao's rapeseed oil. Confounding factors in smoking are so numerous and unpredictable that it is almost impossible to unrav-

el smoking as a cause from a welter of non-smoking behaviors that smokers engage in with shocking disproportion. Stanley Coren, a Canadian expert on "handedness," writes that a study in Michigan has shown that left-handers smoke considerably more than right-handers.¹ (They also die nine years earlier—and not due to smoking.) In 1990, two papers published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* by stop-smoking researchers Alexander Glassman and Robert Anda showed that smokers were six times as likely as nonsmokers to suffer from major depression and twice as likely to suffer from chronic depression. David Krogh, an anti-smoker, remarked on the smoking personality in one of the most fascinating books of 1991²:

Does being a Rotarian or a scuba diver make a person more or less likely to be a smoker? . . . Does being in group A make you any more likely to be a smoker than being in group B? The answer to this is clearly yes. You are more likely (and increasingly likely) to be a smoker if you are poor, for example, or if you are poorly educated. No surprise there. But what about

¹*The Left-Hander Syndrome: The Causes and Consequences of Left-Handedness.* New York: The Free Press. 308 pages, \$24.95.

²*Smoking: The Artificial Passion.* New York: W.H. Freeman and Company. 176 pages, \$17.95.

these things: You are more likely to be a smoker if you are divorced; you are far less likely to wear a seat belt if you are a smoker; young white women who smoke are much more likely to be binge drinkers than are their nonsmoking counterparts (almost half are, a rate two to three times higher than that of nonsmoking women); men who are downwardly mobile relative to their parents are more likely to be smokers, while men who are upwardly mobile are less likely. . . .

As a group they tend to rank higher than nonsmokers on scales that measure risk-taking and sensation-seeking. . . . Smokers tend to rank high in a constellation of characteristics that collectively are referred to in the now quaintly old-fashioned term "anti-social." . . . They tend to be more rebellious, be more defiant, and have higher levels of misconduct. The correlations in this category are very strong. . . . Smokers seem to have what can only be called a higher sex drive—or perhaps a lower sex inhibition—than nonsmokers. . . . Smokers rank high in impulsiveness. . . . Finally, we have reason to believe that smokers are more honest than nonsmokers in the view of themselves that they present to others.

Hans Jurgen Eysenck, whom Krogh describes as "perhaps the best known psychologist in Britain and certainly one of the most influential psychologists in the world in the area of personality theory," has attempted to taxonomize smokers' confounding factors, and considers them so extensive as to undermine, for the present time, attempts to use smoking as an etiological factor in disease.



It is easy to see how a study such as Hirayama's could be drastically wrong: if his subjects came disproportionately from working-class industrial areas (they did), and if smoking is more prevalent among the Japanese working classes (it is), Hirayama's wives of smokers would have a higher rate of lung cancer than wives of non-smokers, regardless of smoking behavior. Finally, rates of lung cancer infection vary drastically according to race and nationality: British epidemiologist P.R.J. Burch showed in the 1970s that Finns, who smoke only half as much as Americans, are twice as likely to develop lung cancer. Using foreign studies to arrive at cancer links is like using African numbers to measure the threat of AIDS in North America—the entire mechanism of infection may be different. It's significant that the EPA did not cite a single U.S. study showing an ETS/cancer link in its risk assessment—in fact, no U.S. study has ever found such a link.

A particularly weak aspect of the 1990 EPA report is that

it relied on meta-analysis, or weighting different studies to arrive at an aggregate figure—i.e., not analyzing data but analyzing analyses. It's very useful in narrowing down conclusions from a battery of similar experiments with similar controls, but irresponsible when used—as it is here—to draw common assumptions about disparate populations, especially when those populations have been established as having vastly varying rates of affliction.

There was obvious selective bias at work in the 1990 EPA risk assessment. Three of the most comprehensive studies of passive smoke ever undertaken were inexplicably excluded from the risk assessment: the so-called Shimizu and Sobue studies from Japan, and the largest American case-control study ever conducted, by Luis Varela of Yale University,

which was later published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. None of the three studies showed any statistical link between spousal smoking and lung cancer. Publication bias, though not the EPA's fault, is also a factor—studies showing no link between ETS and lung cancer have tended not to be published, as they were non-news until the Hirayama study. As Michael Fumento has written of AIDS in these pages, "Occasional heterosexual cases will make news for the same reason that planes that crash make news while planes that land safely do not."

The EPA went out on a limb to classify passive smoke as "Group A: Known Human Carcinogen," even though most of the studies showed no significant risk,

some showed a negative risk, and the final risk ratio, after meta-analysis, was a slim 1.28. (The highest ever recorded for ETS was another Hirayama study, the so-called "Inoue/Hirayama," at 2.55.) When a similar assessment was made of diesel emissions in 1989, the risk ratio was 2.6 and all the animal laboratory tests came out positive (all were negative for ETS). Despite the seemingly graver threat, the EPA rated diesel only as "Group B: Probable Human Carcinogen." An EPA review of the carcinogenic properties of electromagnetic fields in 1990 found several risk ratios over 3.0, as well as a "consistently repeated pattern of lymphoma, leukemia, nervous system cancer and lymphoma in childhood studies." But electromagnetic fields were not deemed sufficiently perilous even to classify. The ETS risk assessment is the only one the EPA has ever based solely on epidemiological evidence. The fact that it failed to meet the EPA's own seven-point guidelines for epidemiological stud-

ies of potential carcinogens (issued in 1989) makes it seem even more like advocacy.

Radical anti-smokers claim they have to act as advocates to counter the advocacy of tobacco companies, and tobacco interests do indeed have major budgets for their own independent research into smoking hazards. But the industry has no monopoly on the profit motive. The EPA even commissioned anti-smoking activist Stanton Glantz to write a chapter in its draft report on ETS hazards. Glantz, who runs cigarette-quitting seminars and develops anti-smoking regulations for profit, had this to say, at the 1990 World Conference on Tobacco and Health in Australia, about his motives for opposing environmental smoke:

The main thing the science has done on the issue of ETS, in addition to help people like me pay mortgages, is it has legitimized the concerns that people have that they don't like cigarette smoke. And that is a strong emotional force that needs to be harnessed and used. We're on a roll, and the bastards are on the run.

Others may be motivated to push bad science not out of avarice but ignorance. There are even those who muddy the water out of a genuine social concern. Michael Gough, program manager of the Biological Applications Program of the Office of Technology Assessment, chooses to ignore the science of ETS in the interest of reducing smoking, as he indicated in an October 29, 1990 letter to Thomas Borelli, manager for scientific issues at Philip Morris:

Without careful reading of the thesis [by Luis Varela, finding no link between ETS and lung cancer] or careful attention to the ETS issue, I tend to agree with the thesis and the general conclusions of your letter. On the other hand, I probably profoundly disagree with any use that might be made of those conclusions by Philip Morris or any other tobacco company. Anything that reduces smoking has substantial health benefits, and making smokers into pariahs, for whatever reasons, does just that.

Who loses from willingness to accept bad science as a basis policy? Citizens wishing to exercise their liberties, of course, and not just smokers. As Dr. James Le Fanu put it in Britain's *Sunday Telegraph* last May, "We could reach a situation where health activists, using dubious scientific evidence, will be in a position to blackmail us into behaving the way they think we should. It is not an attractive prospect."

Second, on a more personal level, the smoking widower who has lost his wife to lung cancer—and whose being further stigmatized as a murderer and a "pariah" is the goal of the EPA report—loses again. For a closer examination of the grounds on which the husband is made a pariah, let's take the highest available estimate of a non-smoking wom-

an's annual risk of contracting lung cancer—48 per 100,000—and see what danger he poses to her. If we accept, *arguendo*, the 1.28 risk ratio, the smoker's wife's risk rises to 61 per 100,000. That's 13 extra cases per 100,000. Put simply: maximizing in every way possible the most extreme scenario painted by the EPA study, a smoking husband has a 1-in-7,700 chance of giving his wife lung cancer in a given year in the future. How reasonable is it to torture him with the prospect that he is slowly knocking off his loved ones?

Finally, it goes without saying that science suffers for the cause of smoking prevention. But what if the cause itself suffers? It is not uncommon that when bad science is introduced into the structure of social policy, the entire edifice of proscription and caution collapses. In 1985 the British government sent a hysterical mailing on AIDS to every household in the country. Making dire predictions of an epidemic, it warned that AIDS was an equal opportunity disease from which no one was

safe, and urged extreme caution for all. The result? Old ladies in provincial towns were petrified. Non-monogamous homosexuals and intravenous drug users, if convinced by the packet that their risk was no different from that of the rest of the country, now saw less reason than ever to modify their behavior. Within a year, the London *Spectator* was suggesting that this "public service" was actually spreading AIDS.

Closer to home, paranoid anti-drug organizations like Partnership for a Drug-Free America may be exacerbating the drug problem by demonizing drugs like marijuana—mild compared to the President's Halcion, and quite innocuous compared to alcohol. It is a point starkly made by Dr. Lester Grinspoon, a Harvard psychiatrist and drug specialist, as written up by Richard Blow in an excellent exposé of Partnership that appeared in Washington's *City Paper* last December:

Partnership ads about marijuana "scare the hell" out of a high-school senior. This student then goes off to college, where his roommate smokes marijuana, with no apparent adverse effects and without going on to shoot heroin. He begins to wonder if he's been lied to, and winds up trying pot for himself. He lives. Having rejected Partnership warnings about marijuana, he might subsequently reject more important warnings about riskier drugs such as cocaine or heroin.

Such a backlash could result if people consider the questionable science of environmental tobacco smoke reason to ignore the surgeon general's and other warnings on the hazards of tobacco smoking itself. If so, the EPA's hasty risk assessment could create more than inconvenience, rancor, and diminished personal liberty—it could create smokers. □

Edward Conlon

Down in the Hole

Six weeks with the police in New York's subway tunnels.



Come back to the subways! But not to live! Only to go from one place to another! There's not much graffiti, and you're wrong about crime—it happens mostly during the day, not at night! The cops call it “the Hole,” but you don't have to! You can kind of tell if it's raining, or if it's day or night, even if you're deep underground! These thoughts clacked and pinged through my mind like slot-machine lemons for the six weeks I was lost on the subways with a friend of mine, a plainclothes transit policeman.

In the eyes of the world and the guts of Middle America, New York is the embodiment of urban nightmare. And the subway is where our bad blood flows. To begin with, the numbers: the 4,100 officers of the New York City Transit Police make up the sixth-largest police department in the country. Police from twelve districts patrol the 26 lines and 469 stations of the subway system which, with 740 miles of track, is the largest in the world. The annual ridership is over a billion. A billion! That's China! The population of Manhattan alone triples daily—to four-and-a-half million. Eight hundred thousand people pass through Grand Central Station each day. There were over one hundred thousand

robberies in New York City last year. And of the 23,000 homicides that took place in the entire country, the city claimed one in ten.

It began as a bet. My ride, that is, not the murders or the robberies, although much would be explained if that were the case. We were talking about the pressures on policemen and the manners of New Yorkers, and my friend told me I couldn't go two weeks without wanting to hit someone in the head.

“The public breaks you,” he said. “They tell

you to fix the turnstiles, they yell at you if the train is late. If one person a day said, ‘Thank you,’ it would be worth it. Little old ladies are good for that. But the harder you try, the more abuse you catch. When you catch somebody, always the last person to show up has to yell, ‘Why are you harassing that man!’ Or it's, ‘Where were you, you jerk?’ Except for when they need you, you feel like you're the enemy. A lady had a heart attack on the 4 train downtown, and it slows things up. I'm there and this yuppie, suit and tie, says, ‘For the delay this lady caused me, the least she could have done is died.’”

(I don't mention the cop's name because of a regulation prohibiting “adverse criticism” of the department, which is punishable by up to fifteen days “modified duty”—straightening files. “Adverse criticism” is a term of magnificent

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breadth, and can apply to statements as various as "Middle management often takes a cavalier attitude toward Fourth Amendment issues" and "That's the sergeant, the tubby bald guy over there." Also, police work is a twenty-year civil service job, and the bosses have long memories. I will call my friend John and give his colleagues other, more imaginative pseudonyms.)

Transit cops go for an extra week of self-defense training after the normal six-month stint in the Academy. Cops in uniform usually work alone, and the radios are unreliable underground. And when a cop is in trouble, help has to wait for the next train. Many criminals know this. The periodic terror and routine abuse undo some people over time, and others virtually instantly. The brutality of the subways has led some cops to respond to the public in kind; less conspicuous are the punishments they visit upon themselves. The divorce rate is extremely high. Alcoholism is common. When John told me that the Police Department averaged eight suicides a year, his partner added, "That's just the obvious ones."

But police work, being work, is mostly dull. By day, the cops serve primarily as information booths. By night, they are scarecrows, a "visual deterrent" to whoever might be after more than a ride.

Some plainclothes cops want to look tough, to wear the same hard face they do in uniform. The problem is that the bad guys can spot it in an instant, and it frightens decent people off the train.

For the first week, we were on a "Quality of Life" assignment, which the cops call the peddler detail. John and his partner for the week, a woman named Robin, were to chase the panhandlers and vendors from the platforms and trains. The peddlers were given summonses for \$50; the panhandlers, unless particularly menacing or persistent, were simply escorted from the train.

New York City's shelter system can hold a maximum of 30,000—lower than even the most conservative estimates of the city's homeless population. Around 30 percent of them are mentally ill, a population that overlaps with the 25 to 30 percent who are substance abusers. "There's an incredible concentration of discarded citizens here," John said. "They all gravitate to the hole. Mental patients, alcoholics, crack-heads, they all get out of the hospital and go straight to the hole."

"It's bad when it rains," added Robin. "They all come underground."

On the first day, it rained. We ate lunch at a diner in the Village. Two young Hispanic men sat down in the booth next to us and listened in on our talk of homeless crack-heads and police suicide. We noticed their absence when the waiter brought two steaks to their empty table; they left twenty dollars and decided to eat somewhere else. As it happened, that day we were a bit more popular with the criminals. John and Robin work well together and, like most male-female teams, are difficult to spot as police. Minorities

and women have a natural edge in plainclothes work. Both cops are of medium height and solid build, and both are from Brooklyn. John is Italian and Robin is Irish. John has a ponytail and wore jeans and a gray jeans jacket, a white turtleneck and Timberland boots. Robin had a gray hooded sweatshirt, jeans, and running shoes. Both wore black nylon waist pouches for handcuffs, paperwork, and extra rounds. The guns are in hip holsters and the new radios can fit in the back pocket. (The old ones were the size of cinder blocks.)

Working the Seventh Avenue line, we had four ejections and one peddler summons in an hour. The peddler was a Haitian woman who sold Nike sweatsocks from a platform on Penn Station. I don't think she spoke English; she said nothing and her eyes welled up with tears as Robin wrote a summons for the name on her Human Resources Administration ID card. For an ejection, the officer asks the person for a name, age, address, and marital status, and writes down a brief

description for a more-or-less informal record. Though the person rarely has any identification, a real name is often given out of pure indifference. Even if a panhandler gets a ticket, collecting such fines is a low priority. If a face becomes too familiar—"Look, this is the

third time today I've had to chase you. If you do not have the decency to at least move to another station . . ."—the threat level ascends, but unless someone is an actual menace, an arrest will not be welcomed at the station: *What's this, a bum? On the trains, you say? There may be a medal in this for you, O'Reilly, keep up the good work.* Mercy and economy mix well in keeping such cases from clogging up the system.

At West Fourth Street, we ejected Kandi Jackson, age 30, undomiciled and unmarried. She was a pretty, slim black woman in a long, dirty, pale-blue down coat, in jeans and sneakers and with a floral kerchief on her head. She sat on newspapers, and had a duffel bag with other pairs of sneakers inside. She stood as John flashed his badge.

"It's Kandi, with a *k* and a *i*, remember that. What's your name?"

"Officer."

"I ain't gonna call you Officer, I'm gonna call you 'Mr. Officer.'"

At Penn Station, we moved Thomas O'Brien from the stairs. With his long hair and scurvy beard, his leatherette coat and brown-bagged malt liquor, Thomas is a ringer for Mickey Rourke in *Barfly*. In his late thirties, he is also probably in his last years. He was pale as a drowned man, and could have been a derelict from central casting except for his gleaming gold fingernails, each an inch long, and what looked to me like wedding rings on each finger of

his left hand. John thought they were tinfoil; I hoped so.

We also met Ann Conkel, a heavyset white woman of "about thirty," by her own estimate. She spotted us from her post beside the token booth, smiled weakly, and pretended to drink from her coffee cup of change. Ann wore bright red lipstick, and her eye makeup—black and green and deep brown pancake in broad concentric circles—made her look like a rabid raccoon. A red-spangled fortune teller kerchief, blue gauchos, and sailor sneakers completed the outfit. She gave a Bronx address unnervingly near my own.

Times Square brought us to Diane Warden, a 40-year old black woman, broad-built and placid. She wore baggy, tweedy, sooty men's clothes: a blazer, canvas pants, and heavy leather shoes. She shouted a preemptive "Hi!" when she saw the badge, and continued the interview after the questions ended: "And I got two kids, and—"

"You just can't stay on the stairs, Diane."

"All right. You know I wasn't harassing anybody, or after a purse..."

A friendly, almost collegial tone was typical of exchanges between cops and the homeless. There was a recognition that everyone else on the train would be gone soon, would be at work or dinner or home, and only the police and the street people would be together underground for the hours and years to come. One man said to Robin as she sent him from the Christopher

Street station, "Hey, don't I know you? Yeah, you threw me out last week, remember?" The man laughed and was slow to leave. "Last week—you remember me!" It was a wise-crack, but with a plaintive undercurrent; here, for a moment, was someone to talk to.

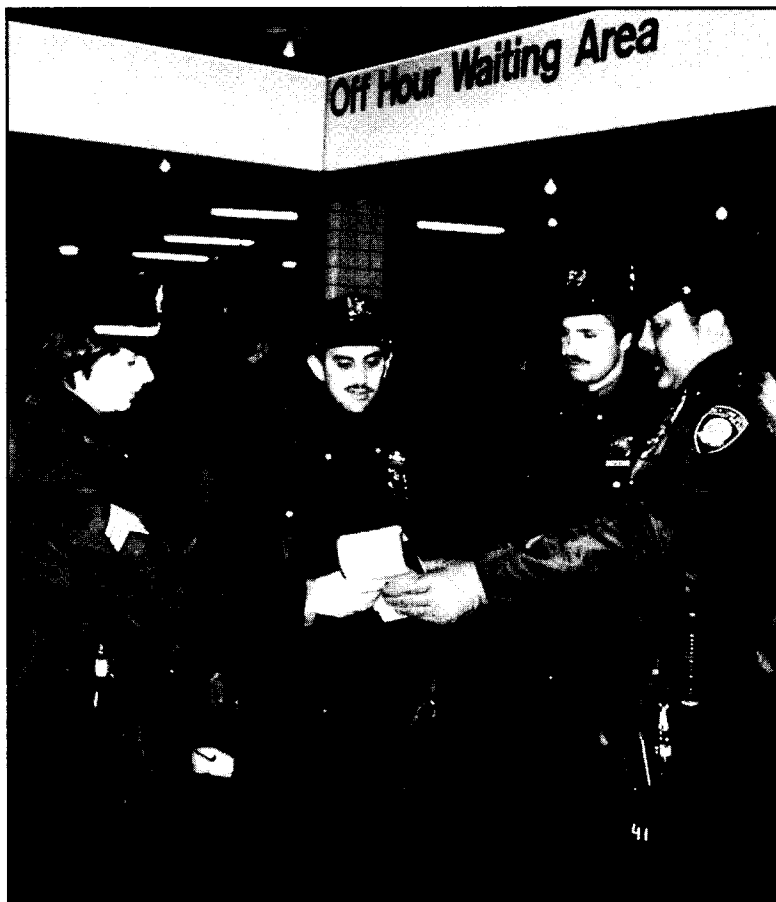
That first day was a relatively short one, as John and Robin had to meet the sergeant to get their memo books signed. "The scratch," they call it. The uniform is "the bag." Cop slang favors hard, abusive monosyllables.

"For an ejection, the assignment is to identify and correct the situation," John said. Another cop translated: "If they piss you off, you tag the skell and boot 'em."

Iwould meet John every day around noon, down the hall from headquarters. As the weeks passed, I was able to spot most of the undercover cops at about fifty feet. Too many of the men look like fraternity brothers or the fellas at a corporate softball game, with their Giants sweat-shirts and Mets caps, new jeans and white leather sneakers. The "casual but neat" look bespeaks the good homes they come from, but is demographically out of whack with the off-hour ridership of the trains. On hot days, the bulletproof vest is hard to conceal, even under an oversize shirt. It sticks out over the shoulders and chest like some kind of medieval training bra, especially on the very thin, the muscular, and the obese.

Some plainclothes cops want to look tough, to wear the same hard face they do in uniform: that blank, angry, no-

nonsense mug behind mirrored shades that terrified Hitchcock. The problem is that the bad guys can spot it in an instant, and it frightens decent people off the train. But other cops get around it. One wears a three-piece suit with a bowler hat, a kind of Fiorello LaGuardia costume. And John, something of a thwarted actor, has a variety of disguises. There is the construction worker with his tool belt and concrete-dusted boots, the messenger with a knapsack and lycra shorts, and the tourist with baggy Hawaiian pants, subway map, and video camera bag. He has a false cast and sling for his arm. Most ingenious is the "sixties guy" outfit, inspired by the Kiefer Sutherland character in 1969. With his



non-prescription granny glasses, pre-torn jeans, and black suit vest over a T-shirt, John is as convincing an out-of-town has-been as I've ever seen. He is looking for sandals and love beads. His partners have expressed the hope that he doesn't find them.

For the peddler detail, we would ride a particular train up and down the line, waiting for people to come through the train hawking fortune cookies, wallets, *Street News*, or whatever else they had. Perhaps three times a day, we would go through the big stations—Penn Station, 59th Street—and clear out the people working the platforms. On the normal anti-crime detail, we would spend more time at

the stations, at smaller ones earlier in the day to write summonses for farebeaters, and at the busier stations later on, where we would watch for more serious crimes. Catching farebeaters is easy enough in uniform; people hop the turnstiles with a contemptuous lack of concern. In plainclothes, it is shooting fish in a barrel. The energy with which the cops wrote summonses so early in the day led me to ask a foolish question:

"Do you guys have some kind of quota?"

"Um, there's no quotas but . . . allocation of resources is based on volume and there is . . . a friendly competition between districts."

Most of the young cops and almost all in the specialized units tend to be "buffs," dedicated and enthusiastic. And the traffic of farebeaters is so huge and regular that if a cop routinely comes home empty-handed the sergeant may presume that the officer is spending the day in the doughnut shop. When a call came over the radio of a robbery or an assault that was too far away to respond to, the cops would complain in a real sore-loser tone of voice, "Why can't that happen here?"

We began one day on the Lexington Avenue line and caught nine farebeaters in just over an hour. The station was full of angry people: an old black man banged his cane on the special-entry gate: four, four, and five sharp metal-on-metal cracks. "Would you open the door, you son of a bitch!" A young black man in a business suit went through the turnstile, cursing volubly. When John picked him up, he protested, "They wouldn't take my money! Look here, I got it, they wouldn't take it!" He paid his fare and returned sheepishly to the train. A drunken white laborer wandered around the station, growling "All's they do is rips ya's off!" We stayed close to him until he got on the train. And a young black woman in neat street dress paid her fare and waited by the turnstiles through two trains, calling out "Watch it, the cops!" to a number of people who might not have otherwise appreciated the presumption that they were petty criminals.

"She'll be the first to bitch when the fare goes up," John said. "If she stays through another train, I'll throw her out."

Keith Thomas, a white teenager from Queens, slipped through as John was writing up someone else. "What is wrong with you! You see I'm a cop, you see I'm right here, and still you go through!"

"Well, I had a token but I need another one to get home. I thought I could get through since your back was turned."

Tara, a tough, athletic blonde from upstate, is John's regular partner. Her generally cool demeanor was a few degrees chillier when she stopped a middle-aged man who

squeezed in behind his friend, two-for-one on the token. A dapper dresser in black patent leathers and gray flannel slacks, oxford shirt and tweed cap, he responded to Tara and her badge as if she were a girl who was willing to go to absurd lengths to get his phone number. He walked up to the train, already in the station, and laughed as he called to her, "I'll give you one, two, three, four—there you go, see you later!"

Even after she stopped him, it was a few minutes before he could take her seriously.

"Step over to the wall. Let me see some ID, sir."

"Sugar, would you please . . . if you feel that way, I will just get a dollar. Sugar—"

"Do you have ID?"

"But sugar, sugar baby—"

Officer Sugarbaby made no particular haste in writing that summons. Policewomen bear an additional set of burdens, from the fit of the vest—with their generally shorter torsos, the holster pokes up on the side—to the kind of disrespect described above.

John, I think, has never been told that he was "looking pretty juicy today" by someone he was slapping the cuffs on. Like most cops, Tara takes it well enough but there is, perhaps, a gradual toll on the sympathies; in any case, her partner is a far

softer touch. One afternoon, John worked alone in uniform and let three people through the gate in less than a minute: a homeless man, a woman who said her wallet was stolen at work, and a middle-aged woman in a housedress, who sobbed and chattered in Spanish as she proffered a handful of dimes.

Tara was never such an easy mark. Miguel Duenas found that out when he went through the gate. A slender 30-year old with a childish aspect, he giggled at her questions and his eyes wandered up and down the platform. He was also, plainly, both sober and reasonably intelligent.

"Where do you live, Miguel?"

"On ah, on ah, on ah, Nealand. Lealand. You know."

"I don't know. You living there or me? What's the address?"

"It's ah, seventy-five, seventy-five, seventy-five, ninety, ninety-five."

The auction ended at ninety-five. Tara looked through his wallet until she found an address. I picked a business card from the paper-shuffle and took it from her; it was from a psychiatric social worker at the discharge planning unit at Bronx Municipal Hospital. As it was the first day I had worked with her, a public contradiction was out of the question, but I told her he was a mental patient as soon as he was out of earshot.

"It's a tough call sometimes," she said. "Last week we

*As we ate lunch we watched the subway
exit to see if anyone ran out. A lot of people
run to the train, but those who run from it are
often carrying someone else's purse.*

got a big group of Hispanic girls for fare beating. While we were writing them up this white guy goes through, you could see he was retarded, and we just let him go. They made a lot of noise, said that it was race preference. Stuff like that happens a lot."

I watched uneasily the only time John showed some temper. A homeless black man went to hop the turnstile as the TA clerk was taking out the tokens, and the clerk chased him away. Startled, he left and went through when the clerk was back in the booth. He was tall and gangly, sweaty in his greasy, red down jacket. His cuffs were rolled up over the ankle to reveal an open, waxy red, baseball-sized ulcer. When John ordered him against the wall, he explained how annoyed he was because he mistook the clerk for a policeman.

"He challenged me, you know, and—"

John cut him off, barked back in his face:

"He didn't challenge you. He works for the Transit Authority, he tells you not to go through, you don't go through. It's that simple, you understand that? What's your name?"

"Donald Willis."

"What?"

"Donald Willis."

"Take your hands out of your pockets. If somebody tells you not to do something and you're wrong, you don't do it. It's that simple. You do not take it as a challenge. You understand what I'm telling you?"

"I know—"

"—because Donald, right now all I'm doing is kicking you out. If I see you again, because of what you just did, the disrespect you gave this man, I will have you in jail so fast your head will spin till next week. Do you understand that?"

"But you know, what I'm saying—"

"Shut up. We are not having a discussion here. You are gonna give me the information and you're gonna leave."

"All right. . . . You know why they come down on freaks in Mexico?"

"Are you married?"

"Anybody that looks—"

"Are you married?"

"A freak is automatically discriminated against."

"Are you married?"

"No, I'm single. Just because of the way I look, and don't have any money, that's the only—"

"That's not discrimination, sir, what happened is you weren't paying your fare. You're supposed to do it. He works for the Transit Authority, he told you not to do it. You waited till he turned his back, then you went through anyway. See what I'm saying to you?"

"Yeah, yeah."

"Okay. You're getting off with a warning this time. All I'm gonna do is tell you to get out of here. If I do see you again, Donald, I will lock you up. That is a promise. It's not a threat, it's a promise."

"I just want to say that in Nicaragua, the rich, they discriminate against all the poor."

"Okay."



"Just because they're poor. They could be a freak, too."

"Okay, Donald. Back outside."

I told John that I thought he had been a little rough on him.

"He was sick, he was crazy—did you see his ankle?"

I was surprised to hear him agree:

"Yeah, and there was no way I was ever gonna get close to him. I'd rather break my own fingers before I'd touch that guy."

Though unpleasant to watch, it had been the right play: Donald was someone who could take advantage of a situation. Though he was likely physically weak, he was bigger than either of us and not of sound mind. He broke the law and got a browbeating for his

trouble, and several million people were able to take the train that day without having to hear from the self-appointed spokesfreak for the oppressed south of the border.

After the steady activity of catching farebeaters, the watch for more serious crimes was generally dull. We would go to a station, often near a school, and wait. The high-crime hours are between three in the afternoon and nine at night, which is to say between the final bell and "Doogie Howser, M.D." Though the students have free passes, we watched

dozens of others hop the turnstiles without making a move.

"It'll blow our play for later," John said. "Every kid knows who you are once you start the summonses. It's tough enough as it is. I think they made us already, I don't want to give them any more breaks."

A few minutes later a group of teenage girls walked past, singing softly, "Undercover D's! Undercover D's!"

"They have to let you know they know, the wiseasses!"

We took the next train out. We rode for a few stops on the last car, the traditional after-school party car, and returned to the station. A dozen boys hung out at the end of the platform, waiting as a number of trains passed. Some left and others arrived, milling about. We took a seat at a hopefully discreet distance and watched them for half an hour. A group of four or five more boys passed us and joined them. John remembered that he had arrested one of them for robbery a month before. They took the next train and so did we, a few cars apart, and watched them. It was a downtown train, and as we rode John also recalled that the kid he knew lived in the Bronx. The group got off at Grand Central Station and waited, again at the end of the platform. We watched again as they drifted apart, with odd twos and threes taking separate trains, until the last stragglers departed.

Most calls like that end in lost trails and dead ends. More frustrating are the false alarms. One morning I worked the Lower East Side with John, Tara, and Keith, another cop whose partner was on vacation. We were at Delancey Street and got a call for a robbery in progress at East Broadway, one stop down. It was a humid day, and the transmission came over like a cheap AM beach radio, a laryngitic croak through a cloud of white noise:

"Be advised . . . armed . . . Oriental male . . . tunnel . . ."

"Central, which way is he headed?"

Two Oriental males, one in a black jacket, had robbed someone on the street and fled to the East Broadway station, possibly into the tunnels. One had a gun or a knife. If they headed uptown, they would run into us. We raced to the end of the downtown platform, and two uniformed cops waited on the opposite side in a similar attitude of anticipation.

"Central, which way is he headed? Either we're headed in the wrong direction, or they are. Jesus, we're in Chinatown, all they say is 'two Oriental males.' This is a situation where peoples' rights get violated."

The train came and we took it. We ran out at East Broadway to find an empty station. The call had come from the city cops, who do not use the same frequency as the transit police, and there is a three-to-four-minute delay in the relay of information. Central updated the story: it had

not been a robbery but some kind of dispute on the street, perhaps a family argument, which ended with one of the parties brandishing some kind of weapon before running away.

"It's a tougher collar down here," said Keith, a six-year veteran who is one of the most active cops in Manhattan. "The Chinese gangs, they go after their own kind. Other kids, too, they slip right back into the projects around here. Uptown, a lot of them come from the Bronx and they gotta get the train back home."

We grabbed slices of pizza and had lunch in Seward Park, a playground on Canal and East Broadway at the eastern edge of Chinatown. City Hall is a few blocks below. To the north and east is the Hispanic Lower East Side, to the west the mostly Orthodox Jewish business district that, while still bustling, has only a shadow of its former size and energy. Before this neighborhood

was Chinatown it was Jewtown, and before that Irishtown, and earlier in the century it was part of the most densely populated square mile on the planet. Grace Hall, the tallest building in the area, has a row of Hebrew letters below the cornice in the front, a string of Chinese characters trail-

ing down the side. A group of Chinese teenagers played a kind of human bocci game in the park; one would throw a basketball in the air, and the others would run till it dropped. Whoever caught it would roll it slowly toward someone, and if it hit them, they were "it." And so on. I began to understand the attraction of triads, tong wars, and opium.

As we ate lunch we watched the subway exit to see if anyone ran out. A lot of people run *to* the train, but those who run from it are often carrying someone else's purse. Keith complained that if the mayor closed the Central Park Zoo he would have to take his daughter to the beach "every goddam day." Tara talked about how her sister was going into the next class at the Academy. John told us about his standing in his bowling league, back in Brooklyn; he is ahead of Fat Joe but trails the Fish Twins. And then we got a call for another robbery in progress at Delancey Street, threw the food down, and ran back into the station.

The clerk called out "Pay your fare!" as we hopped the turnstiles and went down to the crowded platform. At that time of day, the crowd was a good sign: it meant a train was due. We waited as more information came on the radio:

"... three males, NFD . . ."

"Does that mean, 'No further description?'"

"Yeah—talk about rights!"

We waited jumpily for the train, asking people how long they had waited, looking down the tunnel. A minute, two

*A call for a cat on the tracks brought us
down into the Delancey Street station.
We were unable to find it, and John
said, "If it went into the tunnels,
the rats ate it by now."*

assed, and there was still no train. John asked if we should get a car.

"One of the surface crime cars?" I asked. I hoped that they wouldn't get one, as it would likely mean that I would lose them.

"No. We'll commandeer one."

"Yeah, I think we should," I suggested. Alas, the train came before anyone could answer, and we arrived back at Delancey Street within a minute. Except for the cops, the station was empty. The most perfunctory of panhandlers worked the opposite platform, mouthing "Money, please," in a tepid monotone. The report had been phoned in to 911, quickly and without elaboration. The call was so sudden and insubstantial that John told me it might have been a fake; a smart crook might put in an emergency call to concentrate the cops in one area. The chance of running into the cops in the place he hits is therefore substantially reduced. But no second call came.

"You can commandeer a vehicle in any emergency situation," John explained. "I've taken cabs, hearses, UPS and delivery trucks, regular cars off the street. You can be arrested if you refuse. Sometimes cabbies run the meter. I tell them to send it to the mayor. The only problem I've ever had was with taxis, but I take them 95 percent of the time, and 95 percent of them have been great. Some guys are too good, speeding and going through red lights. . . . One guy scared me, I was gonna make him let me get out. He says—it was a robbery—'Gimme your off-duty gun, I'll go down with you!'"

One night on a robbery stakeout on the Lower East Side, I asked John and his partner, another young buff named Timmy, about a 26-year-old cop who was profiled in the *Times* after having been stabbed for the third time.

"Well, it seems to be kind of an occupational hazard these days," said Timmy in a tone of mild annoyance. He pointed to a three-inch slash on his biceps. "I got this last year. But they said he didn't cut me bad enough for a felony assault charge, and the guy was on the streets four days later."

But far more common than physical attack are ferocious assaults on the senses. It was a Friday night, and the temperature on the streets was over ninety degrees. A call for a cat on the tracks brought us down into the Delancey Street station. We were unable to find it, and John said, "If it went into the tunnels, the rats ate it by now." When I had asked John and Tara for the worst rat stations, the answers quickly escalated into a spirited bidding war:

"The tunnels in Grand Central—forget about it!"

"103rd and Lex, easy."

"34th Street, when they closed it for a while after a rape. The rats ran around like they belonged there."

"14th and Sixth, where all the homeless sleep, you can't even sit on the stairs. You see them go by, dragging pieces of pizza."

Even at the district, where cops can grab an hour or two

of sleep between shifts on benches at the back of the station, the nighttime traffic of vermin makes it an unrestful place to lie down.

While the removal of animal carcasses falls under the jurisdiction of the TA, "any [human] body parts found shall/must not be handled and should be reported to the Transit Authority Police." About sixty people a year are run over by trains. There are a few suicides and an occasional murder, and kids fooling around are knocked from the platforms or fall between cars. But most of the casualties are homeless people who live in the tunnels—between five hundred and two thousand of them. There are some semi-permanent camps, with populations of a dozen or more living in relative comfort, with televisions, hot plates, and refrigerators run on electricity pirated from the third rail. But most are among the benighted legions of schizophrenics and junkies who might roll over in bed, or walk in their sleep, or never really wake up to begin

Five Men Who Take a Chance at Pins

Here are five men who take a chance at pins

And hope to finish with the league's most wins:

One is a medley of volcanic passion,

Which makes him bowl in an indifferent fashion;

Another has a calm and easy style,

Which hardly makes his bowling worth the while;

A third would concentrate and, if you like,

Sometimes produce a spare, or even strike;

A fourth is an intense, well-meaning creature,

But, bowling, lacks a single saving feature;

The last one you would have to search creation

For someone to repeat his split formation.

Together they compose so strange a team,

Sometimes I query, "Do I wake or dream?"

—James Zwaska

with. And a radio call for a "man under!" usually means one of their number. John's first man under was one such case, and he will not soon forget it. He radioed in his findings:

"Central, there's a dead man here, send a—"

"Officer, you are not a doctor, you are not qualified to make that determination. Where should we send an ambulance?"

"Well, part of him's on 14th Street, part's on maybe 15th, there's a loose leg on . . ."

When the sergeant arrived, he was of little consolation.

"First time, huh?" he asked, seeing John queasy and trembling. When John answered in the affirmative, the sergeant handed him a pair of latex gloves and told him to search the body parts for ID. The sights we encountered at Second Avenue were only slightly less gruesome. As we approached the end of the platform, two men emerged, both in their thirties, one ostensibly homeless, the other preppily middle-class in a polo shirt and chinos. The middle-class man was terrified at our arrival, but the homeless man, who had a jagged vertical scar that went from his eye to his jawline, swigged cheerfully from a can of beer. Both insisted that they had done nothing at all, until it became clear to them that we suspected them of drug use or dealing, at which point they quickly confessed their real business in the tunnel. The prepster had performed an act of oral gratification on his companion, and denied indignantly that any money had changed hands:

"No! It's because I like it!"

A quick search confirmed their statements—neither had drugs, and the homeless man had no money—and we let them go. We were on a robbery stakeout, and the peculiar pastimes of consenting adults were beneath notice. And, discounting my last vestiges of respect for the human race, it was a victimless crime. Their choice of boudoir was appalling, but perhaps atmospherically appropriate: the temperature in the tunnels was over a hundred degrees and the stench was overpowering. The flashlights revealed crack vials and great wet heaps of human excrement in liberal profusion. There was a power shed, a small structure about eight feet tall, and John directed my attention to a rectangular white form on top of it; I thought it was a plastic bag until it moved. Human feet, size twelve at least. I walked around to the other end of the shed and was relieved to find a head and body attached to them. Though his appearance was odd—dreadlocks and a surgical mask—he spoke coherently, answering my few questions in a sleepy, succinct voice. I asked him why he stayed in the tunnels:

"Less people. People crazy."

I asked him about the mask:

"Because of the dust. The smell."

He has been on the streets for two years, in the tunnels since January. I asked him what had happened.

"People go out of business," he said, and we let him go back to sleep. Before we left the station, I talked to Warren Clarkson, an extraordinary man who has the unenviable task of keeping the station clean. Warren has come to the aid of both passengers and police in his campaign against dirt and crime.

"I saved a cop's life here once, and there was another time when these two girls came in, they had all their gold on, and a guy came after them with a machete. I went up to him, went into a martial arts pose and said, 'My man, do not mess with me!' I happen to be an A-list liar, thank God, and he ran away. I say a prayer every day before I come to work. It's a life-threatening job. . . . They call me the King Disinfecter. I myself have found at least ten bodies in the tunnels, all from drugs. I use bleach, Pine Sol, and Orange Magic, which makes many people say, 'Mmm, smells like Florida!'"

He opened a bottle and invited us to have a sniff. Tony got about a yard away before he pulled back, covering his face:

"God, it burns the shit out of your eyes!"

"As well as your throat," said Warren as he put the cap back on, "But I suppose I'm used to it."

*Their choice of boudoir was appalling,
but perhaps appropriate: the temperature
in the tunnels was over a hundred degrees
and the stench was overpowering.*

It was not always so. The subways ran for three decades before anyone even thought of putting policemen there. Though there were elevated trains in Manhattan in 1870, the subways were not built until the turn of the century. The population of Manhattan had doubled in twenty years to almost two million, and the city added another million with the incorporation of Brooklyn in 1898. Construction of the Interborough Rapid Transit Company began in 1900 and the IRT opened for business four years later with a line that ran from City Hall to Grand Central, went west to Times Square, then headed up Broadway to Harlem. Five years later, there was elevated or underground service on seven avenues in Manhattan, and the IRT went from the Bronx to Brooklyn. A rival company which became the BMT (Brooklyn Manhattan Transit) opened at the same time, and the first map to show both lines was not printed until the twenties. The city owned the tracks and the private companies leased them for operation until the mid-century, when the city joined them to the IND lines it had built in the thirties. August Belmont, the financier behind the IRT, saw the town from the *Mineola*, his own private subway car, which came equipped with a champagne bar and other amenities that are difficult to find these days.

But the common folk didn't fare too badly, either. The ticket booths were of oak with bronze grilles, and there were men's and ladies' bathrooms at each stop. The cars had cane seats and canvas straps, and there were special

summer cars with open windows. Extraordinary care went into the decoration of the stations, from the gabled control houses of brick, stone, and terra-cotta to the marble and mosaic interior walls. The tens of thousands of mosaic tiles, or tesserae, were set by hand and tinted a dozen half-shades of the specified color; the lilac in the City College station plaque at 137th Street runs from deep violet to pale rose. The plaque itself is framed by lilac and black mosaic in a geometrical pattern and topped by a bas-relief bust of a three-faced deity, one-upping both the modest Columbia College plaque a few stops down and the original Janus on which it was modeled. Other commemorative plaques include the steamboat at Fulton Street, the beaver at Astor Place, the fierce federal eagle at 33rd Street, and the stockade at Wall Street.

Columbus Circle has walls of buff-colored brick that lead, two feet above the floor, to a strip of marble wainscoting. The marble is the base and sides for the rectangular panels of white glass tile that comprise most of the wall. Some panels contain the green-and-beige mosaic tablet with the station name, others frame a ceramic plaque of the caravel *Santa María*, its white sails full against the blue sky. The *Santa María* is bordered with pink-and-blue or pink-and-yellow mosaic—in rectangles and lanky, perpendicular strips—and the walls are crowned the length of the station by a green ceramic frieze of garlands of flowers, broad amphorae, and horns of plenty. And, until 1950, it cost a nickel to see it.

Since the thirties, the trend in architecture has been toward the utilitarian, in aesthetics toward the nonexistent, and in philosophy, if you like, toward a kind of paternalist pessimism. They are trying to child-proof the subway. There are countless printed exhortations to refrain from both spitting and from touching the 600-volt third rail. To prevent graffiti, the cars are made of a specially treated stainless steel on which paint takes twenty-four hours to dry. In some stations, there are new bum-proof seats, six inches of butt-busting blue plastic on black steel racks; the seats flip up unless you sit on them hard and, for me at least, actually *concentrate*. Maybe when we're good they'll put the upholstery back.



The advertisers seem happy. Over the last few years, the ads have taken on a canny specificity, speaking bluntly to a market with little money and less brains. There is a comic preponderance of ads for podiatrists and hemorrhoid treatments. City Hall speaks its piece on AIDS, drug abuse, discrimination. My favorites are the "All it takes is a dollar and a dream" ads for the Lotto, which feature the smiling faces of the thirty-odd slogan contest semifinalists. While I like the campaign, the formula of the smug parallel phrases, the quippy qualification soon grows tiresome: "I'd be overjoyed instead of overdrawn"; "I'd take a bow. Plus a stern, a cabin, and a large crew"; "I'd buy a herd of mustangs. Mostly convertibles." More importantly, the 'dreams' themselves have none of the backalley lust and millenarian rage that are the real stuff of underground vision: "I'd buy a comfortable

seat . . . on the City Council!" "I'd dress to kill . . . the President!" The peepshow would never end!

"**Y**ou just want to stab these people, cut 'em up! You just want to stab the motherf---ers!" As a slogan, it was a distant miss, but the man kept on repeating it anyway as he walked onto the train. He was a black man in his mid-thirties, thin and bearded, red-eyed and agitated, carrying a can of soda and a newspaper under his arm. I stood at the open door and John and Robin were behind me against the opposite wall. He was speaking either to himself or someone in the small crowd that followed him onto the train. I turned to see Robin signal to John.

The doors closed, the train began to move, there was a scrimmage for seats, and the man went through the door to the next car. Robin followed him, then John, then me, then someone else behind me. As I stepped through, John and Robin each took an arm and in smooth unison pushed him against the door. He was in handcuffs in an instant. The two people in the seat beside them leapt up and ran away, leaving me a good spot to watch. The man protested but did not resist: "What you doing? I didn't do nothin', get off me!"

The man behind me echoed him and approached the three against the door. John stepped out to meet him, firm and polite, available for questions and blocking his way. He also held up a knife. →

"What he do? He—"

"He had a knife. Please stay back, sir."

"He's my brother, he—"

"Don't worry, we're just gonna write him a summons and let him go. Stay back."

The train stopped and the production exited, players, crowd, and critic. Upstairs, we met two uniformed cops and John told them that I was with them, the brother was not. People stopped to watch. The brother went on, his voice less angry than fed up; I got the feeling it had been a long day for him. He turned to me as I scribbled at my notepad:

"You a cop?"

"No. Who are you?"

"I'm his brother . . . man, he wouldn't hurt nobody, he wasn't doin' nothin' . . . why they have to lock him up?"

"He had a knife."

"He was just opening a can of soda . . ."

"Well, actually, I heard him say—"

"Why they have to have the cuffs on him?"

One of the uniforms stepped up to us and answered, "It's for our safety. It's just a summons, don't worry, we'll let him go."

A well-dressed West Indian woman arrived and called out indignantly, "What is this? What's going on here! Is this a black-white thing?"

"He was just opening a can of soda!" said the brother.

"What? This man is in chains for drinking soda on the subway? Officer!"

The second uniform approached her and began to explain, his hand outstretched in a gesture of exaggerated patience, as if he were sending back a steak for the second time.

"Look, lady—"

"Don't you point at me!"

The first uniform came back with a politic word: "Ma'am, if you got in trouble, would you want us telling everybody who came by what you did?" They argued, less heatedly than a moment before, and the second cop went to intercept other rubbernecks who began to move in from the other side. Another black man, a messenger, looked on in disgust and called out:

"Are they supposed to serve us, or are we supposed to serve them? I pay your salary, man."

"I pay my own salary," he said, which certainly got my attention. "I make forty grand a year and pay twenty in taxes. I pay my own salary."

We all had to think about that one for a second. Then the messenger spat out, "Who you talkin' to?"

"Who you *think* I'm talkin' to?"

John and Tara finished with the ticket and released the man. The West Indian woman walked away, shaking her head. The messenger said, to no one in particular, "They got the handcuffs on me, too. I'm going through the same thing as him."



The man with the knife and his brother walked off the train. The man called to the messenger, "Have a nice day, my brother."

The messenger responded, "Stay strong, man." And to the cops, with a raised hand, he called, "We watchin' you! We watchin' you!"

We talked with the cops for a few minutes afterward, had a cigarette, exchanged commiseration and thanks. We were jittery with adrenaline, having seen in a few minutes the plausible inceptions of a stabbing and a race riot. I had a look at the knife: its single, sharp, 3" steel blade was an inch too short to qualify for a charge of Criminal Possession of a Weapon, but quite sufficient for the task he spoke of as he boarded the train. If someone had run away from him, he could have

been charged with Menacing, a misdemeanor. As it was, he was charged with a violation of the Administrative Code, section 10-133.C, which prohibits an "exposed blade in public view." It is an offense comparable to smoking or littering. The man had plenty of identification, including a recent inmate card from Rikers Island.

When we found the man with the knife, we had been looking for peddlers. We found a similar surprise looking for a bathroom. It was early in the rush hour in midtown, and Tara and I waited as John asked the token clerk for the key to the bathroom. A train

pulled in and among those who disembarked were a casually dressed middle-aged white man and a homeless young black man. They walked together, somewhat hurriedly, and the white man spoke to him, answering his own exasperated questions over the noise of the departing train:

"Why'd you take that chain from that girl? Why'd you—you can't! You can't take that. . . . Police! Police officer!"

I saw the homeless man throw down the chain two strides before Tara took him and pushed him against the wall. John reappeared and held him as Tara took the witness aside and spoke to him. The homeless man was listless and thin, in dirty jeans, sneakers, and a hooded sweatshirt. He had the strong goatish smell of long weeks on the streets. John had him empty his pockets—menthol cigarettes, matches, loose change—before putting the cuffs on, which he did with sour indifference:

"Man, I don't got dick."

John had the man go to his knees while he took his statement, and sent me to look for the chain, which in the rush hour traffic must have lasted as long as a snowflake on a radiator. Tara spent a moment on the radio and the witness approached us.

The shortcomings of the case were brought out by a bystander, a young black man in an embroidered jeans jacket, who was watching the show from the nearby

stairs. He called to the homeless man and asked if he needed a quarter. John called back, testily,

"What you want?"

"I just wanted to give him a quarter, if he don't have it. He gets to make a phone call, right?"

"He'll get his call."

John went on with his paperwork until the rubberneck called over again, repeating his offer. "You want to mind your own business? You his lawyer?"

"I ain't dissin' you, I'm just sayin, you ain't got no evidence, you ain't got no complainant, you ain't got no case."

It was a fairly cogent summary, in fact, but that was for the district attorney to decide. John asked the alleged perpetrator to get up, saw how stiffly he moved, and helped him. "Dude shot my leg two weeks ago," he mumbled. Other cops arrived and it was time again for me to disappear. The cops arrived in a Chevy Suburban, the latest model paddy wagon. Tara took the suspect upstairs and sat next to her prisoner in the back seat, behind the driver. I heard a train pass and realized that John would be on it, taking the witness downtown, and I would have to pay to get back on. So I went down to the token booth and asked the clerk, sternly, if someone had taken his statement. The response was affirmative, so I hopped the turnstile with the rest of the skulls and went home.

When the rest of the world does what I did then, the same thing generally happens: they get a free ride. Most of those who are caught are charged with fare evasion, a violation of section 1050.4A of the Rules and Regulations of the New York City Transit Authority, a relatively petty infraction carrying a \$60 fine payable by mail. But farebeating can also be construed as Theft of Service, a misdemeanor that goes onto a permanent criminal record. Each district conducts routine Theft of Service or "TOS" sweeps, a kind of "Fear of God" policy that complements the "Quality of Life" details. Once the farebeaters are back at the district, the police run a warrant check on them, and often—about once every seven busts—something serious turns up.

At a lower Manhattan station, with the sergeant there to supervise, I took a seat on the bench nearest the turnstiles, opened a newspaper, and watched the eight plainclothes cops go to work. It was a lucky bench for me, as the sergeant chose it as the place to put the handcuffed farebeaters for the duration of the ninety-minute sweep. First came two white teenagers, tough at first, then pleasant-voiced and pleading, then dewy-eyed and nervous as they squirmed in their cuffs, realizing they would wear them for the next few hours. Then another young white kid, a

chubby little skinhead with a pocketknife. Then a black man in a flak jacket and Islamic skullcap who had no identification but claimed to have worked for the TA and urged, in a deep, solemn voice, "Trust me, man. Trust me." An Israeli student, whose girlfriend was so reluctant to let him go that she, too, risked arrest. A scrawny 30-year-old redneck, in an A-shirt to show off his tattoos. He kept the cops busy with his banter: "Are you Italian? You look Italian. This is false arrest, call my lawyer! Jacoby and Meyers, they're okay. Are you sure you're not Italian?"

The skulls stacked up like cordwood on either side of me. One cop took the opportunity to practice his bagpipes near the 'stiles, avoiding the suspicion of both the criminals and the talent agents. With their hands cuffed tight behind their backs, those who stood looked like they were striking poses for a bodybuilding contest; the ones sitting down looked constipated. And all at once, everyone seemed to get the itches, reaching desperately for a distant spot on a leg or the tip of the nose. The cops' behavior was strange as well, talking to their charges in sympathetic and solicitous tones. The reason for this, as I later learned, was that if they could establish a reliable identification, the paperwork would be finished in a few hours and the farebeaters could go home. Otherwise, the Department of Corrections would have to provide them with room and board for the three-odd days it

The tens of thousands of mosaic tiles were set by hand and tinted a dozen half-shades on the specified color; the lilac in the City College station plaque at the 137th Street station runs from deep violet to pale rose.

would take to get them in front of a judge. Some cops were fatherly, others positively apologetic:

"You ever get in trouble? You got warrants, summonses, anything? Tell your homeboys it's not worth it. Tell the truth, there's no court till Monday, be straight up."

"Let's get down to business, let's be gentlemen about this. If I call this number, I'm gonna get your mother, right? I'll give you one shot, if she gives me the information you gave me, we can get the paperwork done in two hours, otherwise you go away for the weekend."

"All this dragnet bullshit, it's a pain in the ass for everyone involved."

"Believe me, it's nothing personal . . ."

"This is a pain in the ass, I know. Believe me, I got better things to do myself."

The black man in the cap said that he had to go, or else he'd be fired from his messenger job. The police apologized, again, and then one offered to call his boss to say that he was a witness in a robbery, and would be stuck downtown for a few hours. The crowd this time was generally indifferent and unsympathetic. Another white teen raced down the stairs to catch the train in the station, leapt to the barrier, and stayed there, poised like a gymnast on the horse, waiting to see if anyone held the door for him. Some smart-aleck samaritan obliged and he hopped the turnstile into the waiting arms of a cop. And they say New Yorkers just don't give a damn.

When the time is up, the prisoners are cuffed to long chains, five to a chain, and bussed back to the district. Only one of them had a warrant, for car theft, but it had been vacated and he was otherwise clean. The redneck with the Italian obsession was an escapee from Creedmoor; they were otherwise an undistinguished bunch. The next day, transit police in the Bronx stopped two men and a woman for fare-beating; the men opened fire and in the ensuing gunfight, the woman was killed.

As the weeks passed, I found myself anxious to be where the bad stuff happened. I was disappointed when the gun John spotted under the shirt of a 14-year-old boy turned out to be a capgun; the "Cops and Robbers" game they would likely play later would stress the latter role. We made a frenzied dash to get to a 10-58 call on the radio, which means "Officer in need of assistance." Less urgent than a 10-31—"Officer in dire need"—it was however accompanied by a Code 3 call—top priority, lights and sirens—for a surface crime car. An express train took us the twenty blocks to his station, and we were there within three minutes. The cops ran like mad, and at least ten of them, plainclothes and uniformed, beat us there. The cause of the commotion—a mentally ill man who took a swing at a cop—was in handcuffs.

Along with every other cop in lower Manhattan, we staked out the "Screwdriver Stabber," whose three attacks in four days commanded the tabloid headlines for perhaps a week. New York City hasn't had a good pattern crime since Son of Sam, and everyone was hungry for an arrest. The cop who caught him would be set for his career:

"Task force, here I come!"

"Surface crime, I'm there!"

The police had certain advantages: they had a good description, his attacks had been confined to a very small geographical area, and he seemed to persist in spite of media attention and police presence. But whether he jumped off a bridge or went back on his medication, the Screwdriver Stabber stabbed no more and the case remains open. We "played the picks," kept watch for pickpockets on the rush hour trains, but that is an extremely difficult collar, and we came up empty. We caught a "troll," a man with a key to an unattended gate, but I never got to talk to a "token sucker." The token sucker jams the slot on a turnstile and lets the person through after they attempt to pay the fare. He then retrieves the token from the slot in the distasteful yet picturesque manner that gives

him his name. TA clerks have tried putting Liquid Heat and roach spray on the slots but they suck on, undeterred.

*"Are you Italian? You look Italian.
This is a false arrest, call my lawyer!
Jacoby and Meyers, they're okay. Are you
sure you're not Italian?"*

One day as I waited for the cops to get the scratch, outside at Bowling Green, a guy

walked past and cat-called, "Undercover! Undercover man!" And the subway seemed to get smaller. I began to see the same faces. We sent away Thomas O'Brien from another station on the East Side, at the request of a token clerk who said he was "frightening people." He looked like he hadn't slept in the three weeks since I saw him at Penn Station. I saw the man with the knife—again with a can of soda and a newspaper under his arm—and his brother on 14th Street. The two shuffled aimlessly across the platform, laughing. As I waited for John one day outside the district, another chain gang came in from a TOS sweep. One of them stared back at me, and I recognized him as the messenger whose job had been spared at the last one. His boss must think him a fine citizen, stopping two crimes in ten days. He looked at me and shrugged, and we both began to laugh.

When I saw the Hispanic woman John had let on for free—the weeping monoglot with the handful of dimes—I felt compelled to find out more about her. I had thought she was a fake when I first saw her and I decided to at least test her English by asking her the time. The problem was that she was with four or five men, all of whom had huge watches—glittering *faux* Rolexes or digital monstrosities that would not seem out of place on Skylab—and none of whom would appreciate my making a beeline for

the only woman in their midst. Uptown on the East Side to Grand Central to the shuttle across, then down the platform on the Broadway line, I followed her till only one man was with her. I approached and asked if she knew the time. I made no gesture so that she would not simply imitate it and show me her watch. She didn't answer and I repeated the question. She smiled politely and said, in a Spanish accent, "Yeah, it's twelve-thirty. No, say twenty-five after."

Had I solved the case? No, I had lost my mind.

If I were ever to join the police force, my first choice might be the Transit Police. Morale is fairly extraordinary. Like the Marine Corps or a last-place Little League team, the transit cops take a perverse pride in the intrinsic indignity of their position. Some are stuck amid swarms of sweating ingrates and others are left alone, midnight after midnight, in Siberian isolation. And then they switch. One afternoon I heard on the radio, "Central, are you gonna wait till someone gets killed before you get these radios fixed?"

"Be advised, that's an unauthorized transmission."

A shorter answer would have been, "Yes." But often, and more often in recent times, you will hear cops say that they like their jobs. They like each other, too—a recent "10-31" party for a young transit cop with leukemia raised almost \$80,000.

Edmund Burke said that, for us to love our country, our country should be lovely, and almost reluctantly I began to see a peculiar loveliness to the subway. Everyone's there, and everything. It's fairly reliable and it runs all night. You can travel from one end of the city to the other—literally, you can travel for leagues—for a buck and a quarter. Each day, millions of people still go places and get there. Like the city itself, it is a thing of democratic opportunity and imperial reach. Walt Whitman would have liked the subway, even now. Duke Ellington would still sing of it.

There are some strange and beautiful things underground, all the stranger and more beautiful for their persistence through the noise and the dark and the violence. I saw a homeless man waiting out the rain one night on the West Side, sitting on the platform with his pet pigeon; he talked to it and stroked it, and it ruffled its feathers and rested beside him. I saw a *santería* doctor walking through the trains with an armful of roots and herbs, and a woman told me that they were for love potions and "sickness of the stomach." A family of English sparrows have nested on the BMT platform at City Hall, and you can see Mama and Papa bird fly up and down the platform after bits of food and soft bedding for their young. There is fine music to be heard, guitars and violins, entire jazz bands

that echo through the tunnels. Most haunting to me are the familiar songs on foreign instruments, like "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" on a steel drum. In Times Square, a young girl sang so soulfully that there were six or seven couples slowdancing, as if it were the last dance at the prom.

At Columbus Circle, the embellishments have suffered much from vandalism and decay. The glass tile is pocked and chipped in places, some in regular patterns with bits of steel spurs extruding, suggesting some large sign had been removed, others in random profusion, like the backdrop of

the St. Valentine's Day Massacre. In still other places the white tile is gone altogether, leaving patches of cement and splatters of black glue. There is a film of grime on everything, and a yellow scrawl of graffiti on the mosaic. The frieze is in bad shape, with long scrapes along the amphorae and garlands and fierce chunks knocked loose from the horns of plenty. But the caravel *Santa María* is untouched: the white sails are still full, the sky is still clear, and the ship makes its way hopefully to a world that is still new. □



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Since 1973, the American Legislative Exchange Council has been the voice for common sense conservative policies in the nation's state legislatures. With 2,400 members from all 50 states, ALEC is the nation's largest bipartisan, voluntary membership organization of state legislators. ALEC is dedicated to advancing policies which open free markets, promote free enterprise and economic growth, limit government and preserve individual liberty.

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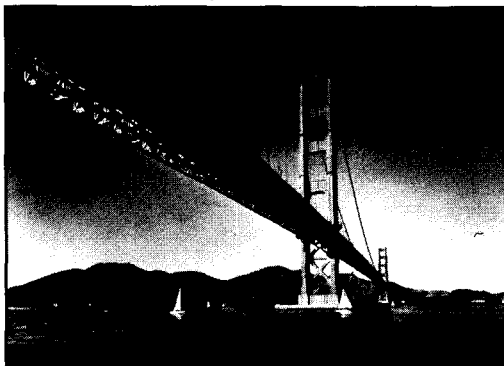
Sam Skinner addresses ALEC in his first public speech after his appointment by President Bush as White House Chief of Staff, December 6, 1991.

1992 Presidential, Cabinet and Congressional Briefing, Washington, D.C.



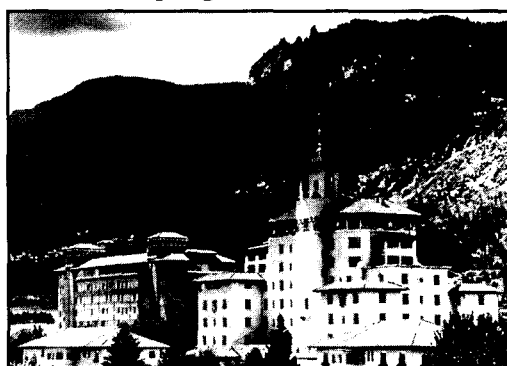
"ALEC shows how to get things done," President Bush said in recognizing ALEC members' efforts at a White House briefing on February 21, 1992.

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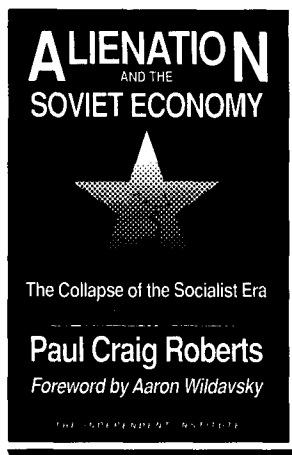
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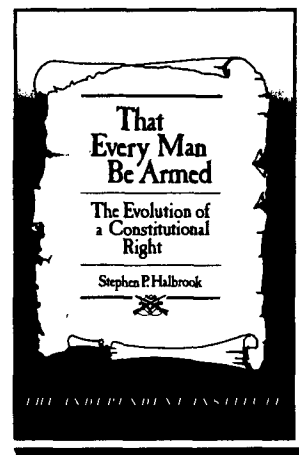
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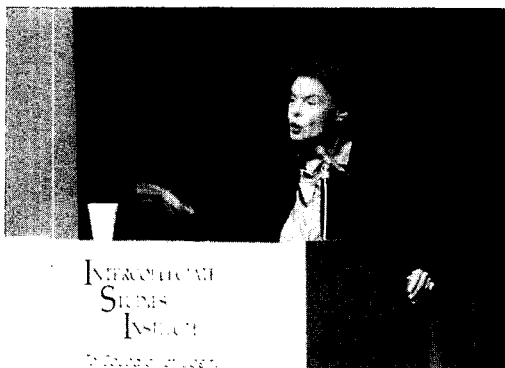
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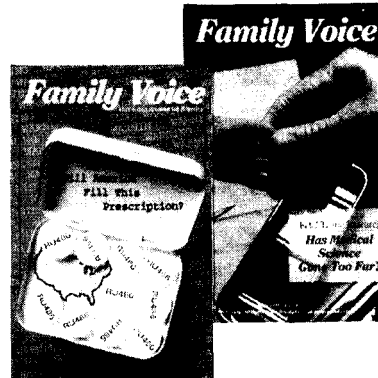
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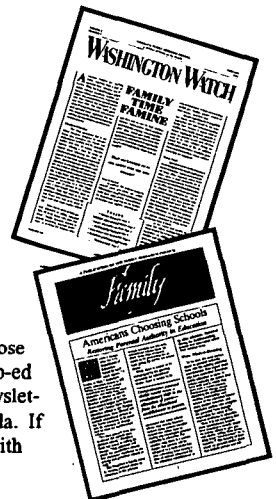
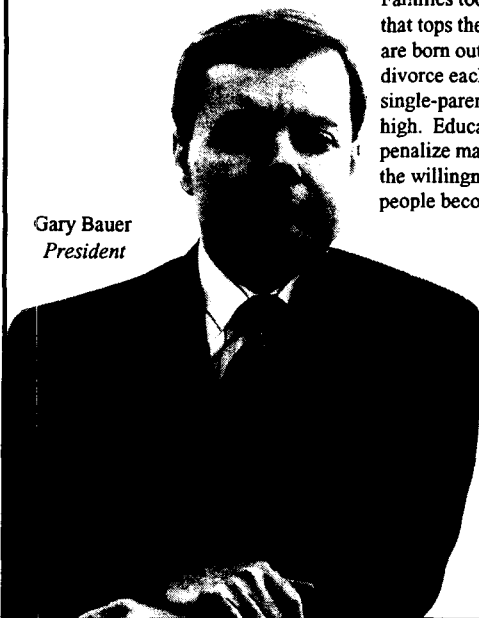
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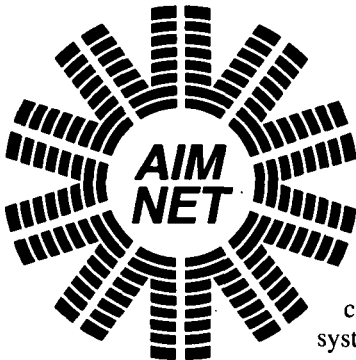
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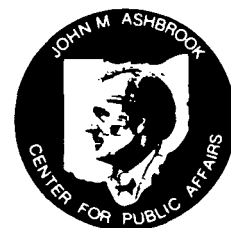
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A Stern Gang

by Michael Ledeen

The emptiness of our public rhetoric is a useful measure of the failure of our political class to comprehend the revolutionary moment we are living. As the Soviet Empire came undone, the Bush/Baker Soviet policy consisted solely of support for the sainted Gorbachev (Bush even called Yeltsin several times to urge him to support St. Mikhail's All-Union Treaty, which had the support of perhaps 3 percent of the Soviet population). When Gorbachev was rejected by his own people and replaced by Yeltsin, our leaders didn't know what to do. Ever since, they have been jerked around from one proposal to another, now endorsing massive aid to Russia and the Republics, then dismissing it; now telling us that old Soviet nuclear weapons are nothing to worry about, then calling for an emergency program to hire Soviet nuclear scientists. When Richard Nixon warned that Bush might get blamed for "losing Russia," Bush started talking about Russian aid again.

It is not just Russia policy that suffers from incoherence and lack of comprehension; the Gulf war was brilliantly managed, but its mission was ill-defined. The result is that Saddam still rules, and is rebuilding his capacity for mass murder. Elsewhere in the Middle East, we seem to be developing a curious affection for the likes of Syria's murderous dictator Hafez al-Assad, while holding our diplomatic noses when in the presence of democratically elected Israeli leaders. Shamir suffers from the same social stigma as Yeltsin.

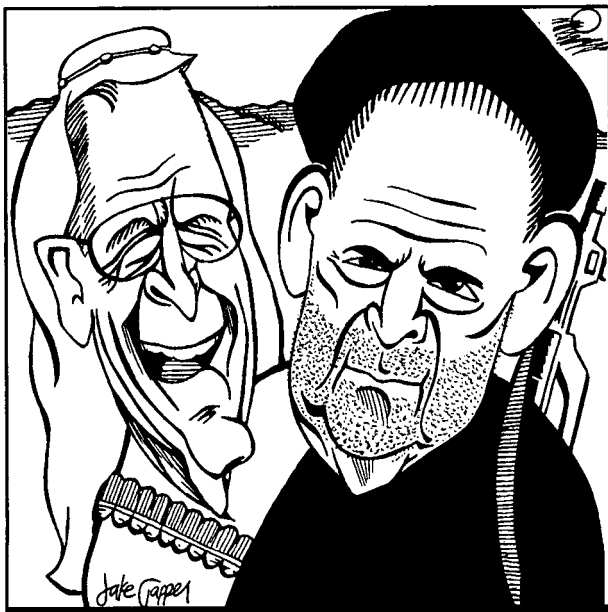
It is tempting to blame the bleakness of our vision on the President's lack of conviction (about most anything), the secre-

tary of state's lack of understanding (of the way the world works), and various other members of the same social set, who pride themselves on good manners but rarely trouble themselves with bothersome ideas. But the disease to which these men and women have so pathetically fallen prey isn't limited to the lofty membership rolls of the Bush/Baker Country Club. No Democratic presidential candidate is making any sense, and indeed it is hard to find a Western leader who is talking sense about foreign policy. The country pushing hardest for massive aid to Russia—Germany—is, as luck would have it, the one that lent the most money to the former Soviet Union, thus stimulating the suspicion that unenlightened self-interest may be driving Kohl's foreign policy. The other Europeans have no particular policy ideas—indeed the French seem to hold all views, depending upon the position of the stars and planets—except to worry that unrest in the East may produce waves of immigrants, who threaten the West European Way of

Life. It is not just Bush/Baker; it is the West.

Up to a certain point, the confusion in the West is understandable, for we are in one of those watershed moments in world history when the old rules have gone and the new ones have yet to be made. In the meantime, we are going to have to live with a lot of confusion. Like Alice after eating one of Wonderland's more potent delicacies, many countries are growing smaller and smaller, as bits and pieces spin off into epicycles of independence and autonomy. This is going to continue, particularly in the former Soviet Empire, and no amount of financial assistance, seminars on democracy, or tender loving care is going to stop this natural process before it has run its course. It is a natural process because it involves the dismantling of an artificial world constructed on the one hand by the fanatical moralist Woodrow Wilson and his shortsighted British and French allies at Versailles, and on the other hand by the voracious Soviet Empire, starting at the same time. All the smaller entities that were either annexed by Soviet imperialism or assembled into different units by Versailles diplomacy are now escaping. They are looking for a new, more natural center of political gravity, and they seem to be finding it in their traditional, smaller units, from Montenegro to Armenia, and from Estonia to Azerbaijan.

Meanwhile, in one of those paradoxes that characterize revolutionary periods, some of the West European nation-states are themselves challenged by breakaway movements, just as we were adjusting to the notion of a European superstate. At the precise moment that the fashionable European geopoliticians are



Michael Ledeen is resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

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talking about monetary integration and a more perfect continental union, calls for independence are heard from Basques, Corsicans, Irishmen, South Tyroleans, and even Sardinians. Which is it to be, Super Europe or a new jigsaw puzzle?

Western leaders fear "destabilization," but destabilization is already in full swing. Trained to manage, not lead, thinking of themselves as a ruling meritocracy that no longer really needs the consent of the governed, they cannot cope with revolutionary change, because they cannot comprehend the ideas and the passions that have produced the revolution in the first place. If they understood the democratic revolution that has swept the world in the past eighteen years, they would never have embraced Gorbachev (who was picked by the Communist Politburo) at the expense of Yeltsin (who was elected by the people). If they understood the democratic revolution, they would have embraced freedom for the Baltics, and for the other Soviet republics that wanted out.

There were many differences between Yeltsin and Gorbachev, but the fundamental one has to do with legitimacy. Yeltsin is a legitimate leader, because he was chosen democratically. Gorbachev was not, and the continued cult of Gorby—most recently on display in Germany, a country that knows a thing or two about leadership cults—is yet another demonstration of our leaders' confusion.

The leaders of the West have lost their moral guidelines, and a wise man once noted that when you can no longer distinguish between friends and enemies, you often end by embracing your enemies' view of the world. That is what has happened to Bush and the Baker Boys, who have packed a good deal of their energy, and most of their passion, into an all-out, knock-down struggle with, incredibly, our longtime ally, Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East. So intense is his feeling about Israel that, even during his recent swing through Asia, Secretary Baker subjected his local hosts to extended diatribes against Israeli recalcitrance and the evils of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank. For the United States to make de facto cause with Israel's anti-democratic enemies inverts our national principles, and subverts our national interest.

Some of the attacks against Israel

have been over real differences in policy (as in the debate over West Bank settlements). Such disagreements can and should be debated openly and passionately. But some of the anti-Israel attacks are clearly spun out of the air. This administration, for example, has shown no interest in pursuing the tough export controls instituted by the Reagan team. Robert Mosbacher's Commerce Department and James Baker's State led the charge in dismantling COCOM, the East-West Coordinating Committee that enforced the embargo on high tech to the Soviet bloc and other unfriendlies. No one at the cabinet or sub-cabinet level had the vision and the courage to speak out against this premature dismantling, and once these controls were gone, there was no convenient way to stop the hemorrhage of Western technology to the likes of Saddam Hussein, Muammar Qaddafi, and Hafez al-Assad.

Although high-tech exports were recognized as a bit of a problem, the administration showed no great concern, even when it became evident that Saddam was hell-bent on acquiring a huge arsenal of weapons of mass destruction. Nor did Bush and Baker protest when our German allies flouted export controls on shipments to the Soviet Union, Libya, Syria, and Iraq—which got 70 percent of its mass-destruction technology from Germany—nor, in recent months, when Syria acquired considerable numbers of SCUD missiles and Libya continued re-vamping the infamous chemical weapons facility at Rabta. The insouciance continues, with the Navy managing to “lose” the ship carrying the SCUDs from North Korea to Iran and Syria.

Even given the horrific results of our incoherent high-tech export policy, the only public Bush/Baker tantrum in the field of export control has been against Israel. And there was no proof that Israel had violated any agreements; even the crime of which Israel was accused (cannibalizing small components of American systems, and integrating them into Israeli-manufactured products for export) has been committed by virtually every American ally.

This unreasonable and ill-tempered campaign against a democratic ally shows the depth of our leaders' confusion. The lack of a principled response from any sizable segment of the American political universe shows a decay of

courage and character that is equally alarming. Given one of the great revolutionary moments in human history, with an opportunity to drive a stake through the heart of dictatorship and advance the cause of freedom throughout the world, the most powerful man in the world has responded by attacking Israel. And no major political figure in the West has taken George Bush to task for it.

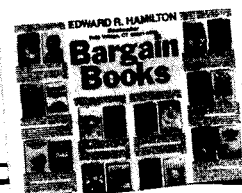
Inevitably, the campaign against Israel has encouraged anti-Semites to become more outspoken and brazen in their efforts to remove the Jews from the fabric of American society. Representative Gus Savage is reported to have said that all Jews are “un-American,” and what frightens me is not so much that he said it, but that it took so long for a political price to be paid for it. Once upon a time, any American politician who said such a thing would quickly disappear from public life, but no more. Indeed, we recently had the disgusting spectacle of the *Wall Street Journal* devoting an astonishing amount of space to a series of articles whose main point was a thinly veiled allegation that many prominent American Jews have “dual loyalty” to Israel and the United States. The implication of such articles is that Jews shouldn't be entrusted with political power, because it is likely they will use it in Israel's behalf. As in the case of Savage, there was no public opprobrium, and the *Journal* cavalierly refused to publish any of the enraged letters it received in response to the series.

If our leaders understood the urgency of support for the democratic revolution, it would be impossible for them to make such moral errors, for they would intuitively shun the embrace of the Middle East's tyrants, and nurture our friendship and alliance with Israel. Instead of bullying the Israelis, we would be encouraging the advance of democracy in the Middle East, above all in countries that are strategically important to us, like Saudi Arabia. For if the Saudis (and the Gulf emirates, and other such) do not democratize, they will soon find themselves in a situation similar to Algeria's: challenged by a radical mass movement that threatens to drag them back to the Middle Ages.

If our leaders appreciated the magic of this moment, they would also understand what is required for the former Soviet Union: active American help, and the institutions of a free society. It is folly to pour

money into an economic system that has freed some prices, but has not privatized enterprises nor made the currency convertible, just as it is folly to help governments that have not been democratically elected or are not pursuing programs of abolishing Communism. Finally, as I have been saying to these many years, the struggle will not have been won until the KGB and the other instruments of the terror have been *shut down* and control over the apparatus has been transferred to the democrats. There must be a reckoning, whether it involves putting the former leaders on trial, or simply by publishing the documents that tell the history of the terror.

Our leaders, alas, are not likely to do any of these things. Confused as they are by daily reading of the national press and watching of the national TV news, they will probably continue to change their policies in response to the latest headlines. We can only hope that some political figure, somewhere in the West, will come forward with a bit more of The Vision Thing. I can't quite sort out who it's likely to be, but it's clear by now that he won't come out of this year's presidential election. □



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Iraq Trap

by Avigdor Haselkorn

While Western leaders express satisfaction at the pragmatism Iran and Syria have displayed in their recent foreign policies (e.g., Syria's participation in the Middle East peace conference and Iran's new overtures to Western Europe), the two countries are busy coordinating a new strategic design in the area. The aim is not only to further their geopolitical interests, but also to nullify U.S. regional gains from the war with Iraq. Tehran and Damascus sense that Saddam Hussein may be on the ropes, especially given the recent feuding within Saddam's family clan hailing from the provincial capital of Tikrit, and growing dissension in the military. Last December, Damascus hosted a conference of Iraqi opposition forces aimed at "drawing up a new joint action plan to topple [Saddam]." And the Bush Administration, acting on Saudi advice, could be playing into their hands.

Among the leaders at the Damascus conference was Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, chairman of the Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI). The group, founded in November 1982 in Tehran, hopes to turn Iraq into an Islamic Republic modeled on Iran. Although it accepts Western science and technology, and denounced Iraq's occupation of Kuwait, SAIRI also demanded the "withdrawal of the foreign armies." SAIRI and other Iraqi opposition forces signed a communiqué shortly after the invasion of Kuwait, pledging to liberate Iraq from Saddam's Ba'ath party and establish a régime that would "fulfill its national duty by fighting imperialism and Zionism and their schemes."

Avigdor Haselkorn is a strategic analyst and defense consultant specializing in CIS and Middle Eastern affairs.

SAIRI has recruited Iraqi exiles and POWs to its regular army unit, which is fully subsidized and largely trained by Iran. Known as Badr or as Number Nine, the unit had over three thousand soldiers by the end of the Iran-Iraq war. Although its claim that it could easily mobilize 50,000 to 100,000 warriors inside Iraq is an obvious exaggeration, SAIRI was the single most important military organization in southern Iraq when the Shi'ite revolt against Saddam erupted in the wake of the Gulf war. Al-Hakim claimed in March 1991 that he was directing the revolt in Basra and elsewhere, and this February, on the clandestine Voice of Rebellious Iraq, he accused the U.S. and the West of committing "crimes" against the Iraqi people by helping to suppress the Shi'ite uprising: "The [Saddam Hussein] regime was given preparations and support by the United States for this crime." Clearly, Tehran now estimates that a rekindling of the Shi'ite rebellion could topple Saddam. And whether or not Iraq disintegrates, Iran stands to strengthen its presence and influence there.

Just as SAIRI is to do Iran's bidding, Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), was invited to Damascus to help President Assad do Syria's. In the aftermath of the Gulf war, Syria, left to face Israel alone, has sought to cement its longstanding strategic ties to Iran. However, the geographic separation of the two countries by Iraqi territory makes it questionable whether Iran can serve as a "strategic rear" for Syria. Recent reports indicating that Iran may be acting as a transfer point for North Korean Scud-Cs on their way to Syria highlight Assad's problem, for these missiles will have to be airlifted from Iran to Syria—a costly option, and of limited logistic value in case of war.

After the war, Assad allowed Talabani to penetrate into Iraq from Syria, hoping

that the PUK would create a territorial bridge across Kurdish northern Iraq that would enable Syria to form a united front with Iran against Israel. The collapse of the rebellion put an end to the Syrian scheme, but with Saddam weakened, Assad is trying again. Mas'ud Barazani, leader of the most prominent Kurdish faction, the Democratic Party of Kurdistan (DPK), was quoted on Radio Monte Carlo last December as warning against "using the Kurdish issue as a bridge for others to cross over and take power in Iraq." Barazani was not invited to Damascus, as Assad and Talabani consider him too close to the U.S. and Israel.

After al-Hakim met with Assad last December, the Syrian media reported that the SAIRI leader presented a draft political plan "for effective coordination and cooperation with the Arab and Islamic states neighboring Iraq . . . [and] free from foreign intervention" to overthrow the regime in Baghdad. On December 29, Agence France Presse quoted Iran's defense minister Akbar Torkan as saying that "Saddam Hussein is at the root of instability in the region, and his continued presence at the helm undermines the establishment of peace and security in the Gulf." In January, the Iranian news agency IRNA highlighted a speech delivered by Talabani in Erbil, northern Iraq, in which the PUK leader "lauded southern Iraqi Shi'ites for their struggle against Saddam. [Talabani] called for unity between the Kurds and Shi'ites . . . saying that Saddam had been weakened and the Army no longer seriously obeyed his orders."

The new Iranian activism regarding Iraq is only one aspect of a larger political design. Last December Iran's President Hashemi Rafsanjani visited Sudan with a large political and military delegation, including defense minister Akbar Torkan, Revolu-

tionary Guard commander Mohsen Reza'i, and the Iranian chief of intelligence. Numerous sources have said the two countries have signed a new military agreement. The Cairo paper *Al-Ahram* said Iran agreed to finance Chinese military deals with Sudan valued at more than \$250 million. A "more dangerous aspect," the paper said, involves the deployment of Iranian Revolutionary Guards in Sudan. In January, the Cairo paper *Al-Wafd* reported the arrival in Sudan of 3,000 Iranian "advisers." Sudanese leader Lt. Gen. Umar Hassan al-Bashir indirectly confirmed the reports in the London-based paper *Al-Ouds al-Arabi*, but said the agreement was "not directed against any other state."

Moreover, the Iranians have sought to draw Yemen into their geopolitical scheme. Last January, Yemen received an invitation to participate as an observer in joint naval exercises conducted by Iran, Sudan, and Eritrean units in the Red Sea. Yemen's foreign minister Abd al-Karim al-Iryani told the London-based *Al-Sharq al-Awsat* this February that his country had accepted because the invitation came from the Sudanese government only, and because of its "fraternal relations" with Khartoum. But, even with the maneuvers over, reports persist of Iranian naval vessels in the area of Trinkitat harbor, south of the Sudanese Red Sea port of Sawakin.

The Iranians, in other words, are positioning themselves on the northern and southern borders of Saudi Arabia, near its oil-producing and -exporting centers. If Iraq disintegrates as a result of the current Tehran-Damascus scheme, the strategic encirclement of Saudi Arabia now underway would only be accelerated. Tehran would press Riyadh to include it in any Gulf security arrangements. Given its growing regional dominance, it hopes eventually to tie the security of the Gulf to Iran, instead of the Arab world. Tightening the noose around Saudi Arabia would move Riyadh's oil production policy closer to Iran's interests than the U.S.'s.

Assad, too, stands to benefit from Iran's Saudi gambit. He knows that the more nervous the Saudis become about Tehran's intentions, the more important his alliance with Iran becomes to Riyadh. More Saudi protection money will thus be forthcoming, enabling Assad to proceed with his extensive military buildup. (See "Assad Commentary," *TAS*, October 1991.)

Presumably, Iranian hegemony in the Gulf will boost Iran's standing among the Muslim states of the former Soviet Union, where a Turkish-Iranian "cold war" for influence is already raging. And that wouldn't be Turkey's only problem if Iran and Syria oust Saddam. An independent Kurdistan carved out of Iraq could destabilize Turkey, which has 12 million Kurds of its own. Rafsanjani would welcome a weak Turkey, as would Assad—who supports the Kurdish Workers' party (PKK) operating in southeastern Turkey, and has a running feud with Ankara over water and territorial rights. In December, Turkish president Turgut Ozal warned Assad in *Al-Hayah* that he "should be careful" about helping the PKK.

Whether Iraq is dismembered or not, the Syrian-Iranian geopolitical blueprint for the north of the country would soon be complemented strategically. Thanks to ex-Soviet arms, Iran and Syria are becoming increasingly compatible militarily. The Tel Aviv daily *Davar* reported in January that Russia plans to sell \$2 billion worth of advanced weapons to Syria. Numerous sources indicate that the deal includes 300 T-72 tanks (some of which may have already been delivered), 48 MiG-29s, 24 Su-24s, and SAM-10 and SAM-11 anti-aircraft batteries. (Syria already operates at least 20 MiG-29s and 20 Su-24s.)

At the same time, a senior official of the Iranian Defense Ministry's military procurement department confirmed to the London-based paper *Sawt al-Kuwayt al-Duwali* that "Russian President Yeltsin has assured the Iranian leadership that . . . his country will remain committed to the [military] agreements and contracts concluded in the past." Under the agreement, Iran has received 24 to 28 MiG-29s, a number of Sukhoi-24 fighter bombers, and 200 to 250 T-72 tanks, and the commander of Iran's air force, Brig. Gen. Mansur Sattari, confirmed in early February that his country now deploys MiG-29 and Su-24 combat planes. The Iranians are reportedly on the verge of concluding another large arms purchase from Russia, including 24 Su-25s and Su-27s and 20 more MiG-29s. Meanwhile, according to a BBC report, Ukrainian representatives have not categorically denied that a \$7 billion deal for Iranian oil and gas reached by both countries last February could involve arms.

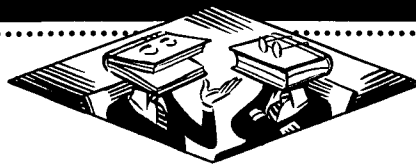
Last September, the chief of the joint staff of Syria's Armed Forces, Lt. Gen.

Hikmat al-Shihabi, arrived in Tehran on a six-day visit. Commenting on the recent U.S.-Kuwait military agreement, the Syrian commander said, "We have already declared our concerns about the presence of foreign forces in any Arab country and we shall still endeavor to drive foreign forces from the region." In October, Tehran Radio quoted Iran's chief of staff Maj. Gen. Ali Shahbazi as saying, "During this trip, military cooperation and the exchange of expert teams aimed at benefiting from the experiences of the two countries in the military field were discussed and examined." The Israeli paper *Ha'aretz* reported in November that a large Syrian military delegation had gone to Iran to train Iranian pilots to fly the dozens of Iraqi planes flown there during the Gulf war.

It is no surprise that the Saudis feel nervous. They realize that they cannot stem Syrian-Iranian preparations to oust Saddam. Nor can they stop the erosion of the Iraqi leader's domestic position. They have thus decided that the best response to the Syrian-Iranian scheme is to win away the Kurdish and Shi'ite leaders opposing Saddam. Thus, in a remarkable turnaround, they are now urging the Bush Administration to help topple Saddam, in hopes that U.S. involvement would assure political sway for the Saudis.

But, paradoxically, even such a U.S. undertaking would end up serving the interests of Assad and Rafsanjani, not the West. Fully aware that its Kurdish and Shi'ite allies cannot overthrow Saddam on their own, Syria and Iran would love to bring U.S. air power into the equation. They know that a massive and continuing U.S. troop presence would be necessary to ensure an outcome favoring Riyadh. Without it—and the U.S. is not about to send back half a million troops—the strategic balance would tilt towards Damascus and Tehran. In fact, by making their collaborative efforts against Saddam highly visible, Assad and Rafsanjani may be hoping to force Bush's hand.

It was Riyadh (and Ankara) that opposed the overthrow of Saddam and urged a premature end to the war, which doomed the ensuing Shi'ite-Kurdish revolt even before it began. Bush would like to erase this blunder from his record before the elections, but may now be repeating the mistake of listening to Riyadh and walking into a trap. □



A Monument of One's Own

by Diana West

In 1718, the 17-year-old Collegiate School changed its name to Yale College, in spite of the fact that neither eponym Elihu Yale nor any of his Yalies was female.

In 1914, Yale alumni erected a statue of Nathan Hale, even though no colonial coeds graduated with the Revolutionary War hero in 1773.

Last spring, George Bush addressed Yale's 290th graduating class, even though Bush earned his bachelor's degree in the exclusively male class of 1948. That's right. Nada on the woman thing.

Most people never make these connections. Of course not. Isn't it easier to forget? But remember we must. The women who did not go to Yale must not have not gone there in vain. We must not forget. *Jamais*. Now that the university has commissioned a monumental sculpture to remind us, maybe we won't.

After a yearlong observance of the twentieth anniversary of "Women at Yale" (once known as "coeducation"), in 1990 Yale President Benno Schmidt commissioned an artwork to celebrate women at Yale. He didn't specify anything in particular to celebrate beyond the fact that Women at Yale were . . . women, at Yale. Sort of a thank-you for being you and thank you for being here—and thank you to the anonymous alumna who donated a hefty sum to get this project off the ground. President Schmidt called on Maya Lin, '81, of Vietnam Veterans Memorial fame, to do the honors. Come May, Lin's piece will be installed across from Sterling Library on Cross Campus, the quadrangle at the heart of Yale.

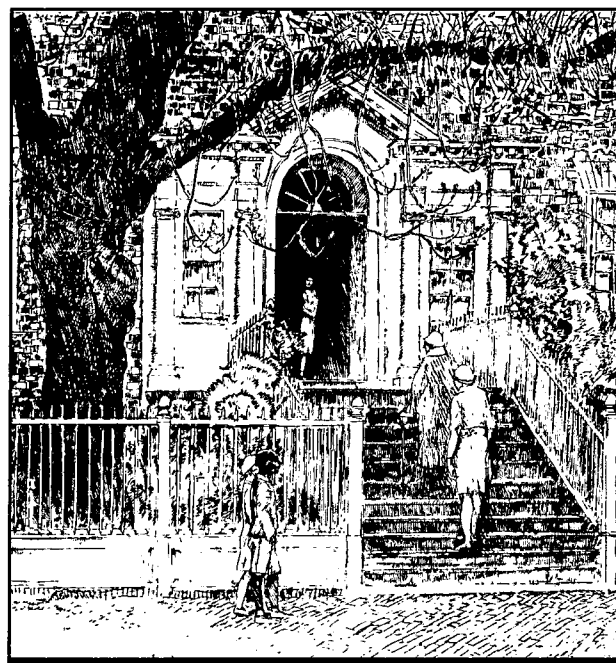
Diana West is a writer living in Washington, D. C.

It wasn't until last November that most Yale women discovered they were about to be commemorated in rock. "The time is fitting for a prominent tribute to women at Yale," wrote Diana Dwyer Brooks, '72, president and CEO of Sotheby's, in the fund-raising campaign kickoff. Brooks briefly described the granite piece Lin calls the "Women's Table" and followed with a plea for funds that reveal a singular bias: "We are writing and calling women alumni of the College, Graduate, and Professional Schools, and current students." Yale alumni agents received an accompanying letter to underscore that "only women are being solicited." In other words, this monument was to be dedicated to Yale women, designed by a Yale woman, and paid for by Yale women—A Monument of One's Own. (Since the campaign began, alas, fund-raisers have pragmatically opened the contribution pool to deep-pocketed Dads.)

Between budget deficits and curriculum cuts, these are tough days for Old Eli. One of the more troubling signs is that Commons, the school's awesome war memorial *cum* freshman dining hall, has closed its kitchens to the freshman class. While this is unlikely to bear too strenuously on the nation's comfort index, it does show just how thin the ivy on Yale's walls has grown. As for the walls themselves, they're not a pretty sight. Yale's neo-Gothic spires, antiqued by crafty artisans early in this century for that half-a-millennium-old look, are finally showing bona fide signs of age that only one billion dollars' worth of work over the next decade can reverse. Not the most opportune time to raise \$400,000 for a table you can't even eat at.

But some token token of esteem was probably inevitable. Yale marked its first decade of coeducation in 1979 with a conference at which female grads reflected on their Yale experience—"the overwhelming sense of patriarchy," as one woman put it, "with male portraits hanging everywhere." Thirteen years later, some alumnae justify the Women's Table as a counterweight to such campus landmarks as Commons, which they describe as a monument to men. To *men*? The memorial honors all the men who ever went to Yale and died for our country because they went to Yale and died for our country—not because they were men.

The Women's Table, on the other hand, has been commissioned precisely to honor a group of women for being a group of women, a rather prosaic inspiration for art. Maya Lin's emphasis on the individual, rather than the



group, helps fuel the emotional power of her Vietnam Veterans Memorial, but the Women's Table, as described by Yale spokesmen (Lin begged off an interview) will portray its subject in bulk, as a batch of statistics. Literally. Plans for the sculpture call for a polished stone tabletop cut from Cold Spring green granite in the shape of an oval (very ovular) over which water will gently flow. As symbols go, the water and the oval are easy enough to interpret in terms of general life-giving femaleness. But there's more. The table will be mounted on its base at a 69-degree angle to commemorate the historic year 1969, when women broke the sex barrier. According to a telephone fund-raiser, the piece will rotate 22 degrees—one for each year women have attended Yale.

Not exactly uplifting imagery. Then again, it's difficult to punch up the heroic qualities of attendance records. Of course, being a Maya Lin monument, the Women's Table will be engraved with the names of all the women who ever graduated from Yale in chronological . . . Just kidding. But it will be engraved. And, as Elizabeth Spencer of the Yale Development Office puts it, "The detail in the sculpture is more fascinating than actually looking at it itself."

A tight spiral of machine-inscribed numbers will emanate from the center of the table, recording the number of women in attendance at Yale from the school's inception in 1701. Get it? *There were no women attending Yale in 1701. Or 1801.*

"There will be a lot of zeros!" exclaims Emily Honig, self-described "chair" of the Yale Women's Studies program. Chair Honig, when telephoned to discuss the sculpture, did not profess to know much about it, although she was willing to oblige the press and make an ill-advised attempt at a sound bite:

"I guess all I can say is, that, you know, I think it's—what's the word? I mean, it's *wonderful* to have something that is a, you know, something that will be a major physical presence on campus that, you know, that celebrates the presence of women, and at the same time, you know, the status of women at Yale, particularly, and I say this as a faculty member, particularly as chair of Women's Studies, you know, the status of women on the faculty is not one that—I mean, it's an issue that a lot of attention's

been given to and a lot of reports have been written about, but, you know, it's an issue that there's a lot of dissatisfaction over. And, you know, it would be nice if we were at a point where, you know, we could really celebrate some major accomplishment of increasing the presence of women in all aspects of Yale's life."

Say that last part again? *It would be nice if we were at a point where we could really celebrate some major accomplishment . . .*

Although Maya Lin was quoted in 1989 as saying, "The monument is more about the future than commemorating the

past," the piece has come to emphasize the historic exclusion of women, not any current achievements. (Who can imagine Vassar, for example, celebrating its addition of male students by reducing the years men were excluded to a legacy of zeros?) The commemorative monument becomes a commemorative accusation. And each of those engraved zeros, which will stretch from 1701 until Yale's graduate programs began to admit women in 1892, will serve not as a tribute to Yale's history of women on campus but as a reproach to Yale's history of educating men. □

BEN STEIN'S DIARY



Sugar Daddy

by Benjamin J. Stein

Thursday

Where am I? I can tell that I'm lying down, and that it's hot. In fact, it feels like it might be Hell. There's a hot breeze blowing over me. I can't hear anything except Elvis Presley singing "Peace in the Valley." When I open my eyes I can't see anything. And I feel dizzy. Can this be it? The Bad Place? For all of my sins, especially the ones against People of Gender?

I lay there wondering for a moment, and then—*pop!* The lights went out, and I felt a draft of cold air coming down over me.

Now I know it's not hell at all. In fact, it's almost heaven. I'm in the tanning room at Giovanni's Hair Salon in Point Dume, Malibu, getting my first-ever artificial suntan from a "tanning cocoon." It's like an old-fashioned waffle iron, only I'm in the middle of it, and there are powerful lamps and a fan to cool me.

Benjamin J. Stein is a writer, lawyer, economist, and actor living in Malibu, California.

There are also cassettes, from which I chose "Elvis: The Christmas Album," even though it's February.

I got up, paid my eight dollars to the lovely Robin, the hair stylist who usually takes care of me, so to speak, and then saw my little Angel Boy, Tommy, almost done with his haircut. He looked at me with a friendly reproach, like the particularly patient teacher of a particularly slow child. "Daddy," he said, "don't you know that too much sun is bad for you? I learned that in school."

"It's not real sun," I said. "It's ultraviolet or something like that."

"Yes, but ultraviolet's not good for you either, because all of the businessmen destroyed the ozone layer. Didn't you know that?"

"Where did you learn this?" I asked.

"At school, Daddy," he said. "I told you that."

We walked over to the Point Dume Pharmacy. This is basically a small town, so I said hello to lots of familiar people on the way. At the prescription counter, I

said to the pharmacist, an older gent, "Excuse me, but do I need a prescription for intravenous Demerol?"

The old fella didn't even gasp. He said, "Let me look that up for you, son."

These country folks have a sense of humor.

At the candy counter, there was a handsome fake-Tiffany coach clock on display for \$75. It had been there for months, maybe years. I think I saw it at Christmas of 1990.

"Do you think that clock might ever go on sale?" I asked.

"No," said the saleswoman.

"But it hasn't sold. The price is too high."

The saleswoman looked at me narrowly. I could well imagine what she was thinking. It had to do with a certain tribe that invented the concept of monotheism.

"We probably won't ever sell it, and we probably won't ever lower the price," she said hopefully.

This woman has a future as a political strategist for George Bush.

I bought five small (that's right, small) packages of M&M's and paid for them. As I put the candy in my pocket, Tommy said, "Daddy, sugar isn't good for you. Why do you not know that?"

"I was absent when Big Brother explained about nutrition," I said. "I beg the Party's forgiveness."

"Are we going to a party, Daddy?"

"You're already in the Party, my boy."

dance at the Palomino in Las Vegas, the last of which is exactly what she does, part-time.

"Now," she said as she picked at her smoked salmon pizza, "Sonja told me that you were really good with money."

"That's the biggest joke I've ever heard in my life," I said. "I'm very bad with money. Money scares me."

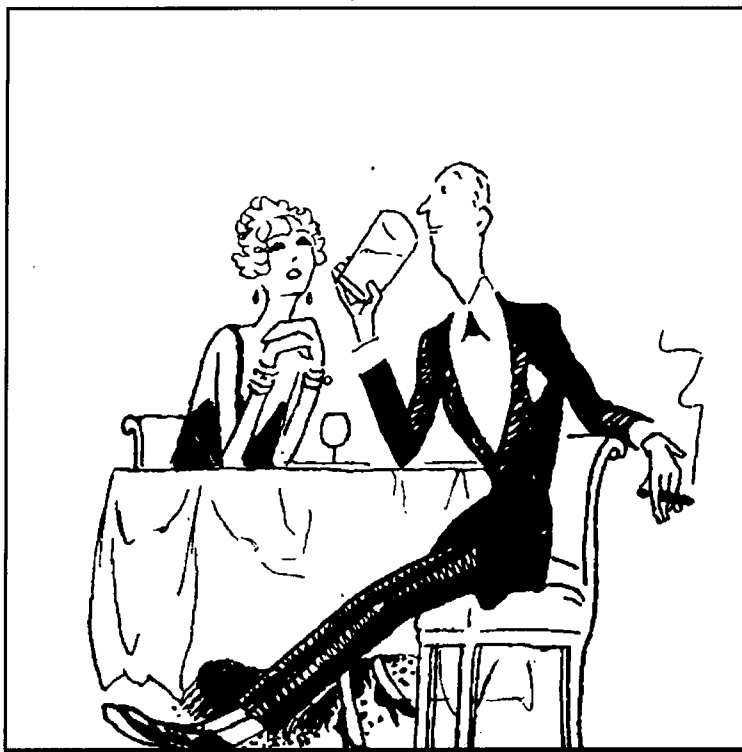
"Anyway," she said, "this is the story. A woman called the Agency and said that she represented a super-rich guy in Singapore. And this guy wants to have a few young American girls brought over for like three weeks, and we'll stay in his house the whole time, and she's only offering me \$6,000 net, and I wonder if you think that's the right amount."

"You mean, based on my long experi-

you're right. Fifteen thousand, net to me."

An enormous busload of tourists came in while their double-decker bus idled outside, making a throbbing, horrible noise. Now that's the difference between Peter Morton and Wolfgang Puck. Peter makes a restaurant like Morton's, which he'd rather close down and burn than open up to busloads of tourists. After all, what makes a restaurant is the people who are there. Wolfgang also has a restaurant, and it's got great, truly imaginative, clever food, but when business slows, he brings in busloads of tourists. To Wolfgang, a restaurant is not the people who are there.

Or Peter opens the Hard Rock Cafes, and they're totally original and fun and light and cheery. Then some dudes rip him off and open Planet Hollywood, a K-Mart imitation of the Hard Rock, only dark and crowded and the food is garbage, plus it's hard to eat knowing that you're in an imitation of something you really like.



Anyway, Sara droned on and on about her huge cash-flow problems. "In September and October, I was taking in twenty thousand a month," she said. "Then I knew the recession had hit because by December, which is usually a great month for me, I was only making about eight to ten."

She told me that she would only ever own a Mercedes, maybe two of

them. As soon as she got rid of her Chrysler LeBaron, she was going to buy a 560 SL and a four-door 500 SEL, and maybe a new convertible, but never a BMW, because those are "wannabe" cars, even if the top end does cost \$90,000.

"Let me ask you something," I said, just because I thought I might take my clothes off and recite the names of the Vietnam war dead in the Granita dining room. "Do you ever wake up in the middle of the night and wonder how you ever got where you are and swear that you can't go on another minute?"

ence bringing American girls over from Los Angeles to Singapore?"

"Right. Plus the fact that Sonja said you were really good with money."

"Hmmm," I said. "Well, that's less than three hundred a day, plus you probably wouldn't get much sightseeing in, plus you probably wouldn't be able to take drugs, because it's a capital crime in Singapore to bring them in. So, maybe it's not that good a deal. I think, uhh, uhh, probably fifteen K, net to you, would be about right."

Sara smiled her killer-girl-next-door smile and said, "Yeah, I think

Friday
Dinner at Granita, Wolfgang Puck's stupendous restaurant in mid-Malibu. As usual, it was a trashy crowd eating rich food.

I sat in a corner, facing an aquarium, and looked at my dinner companion. Her name is Sara. She's five foot, eleven inches tall. She comes from a small town in Montana. She's very good-looking. She looks good enough to work for the Governor of Arkansas and then have enough left over to be a secretary for the President of the United States and still

"No," she said. "But sometimes in the middle of the day I think about it and I feel pretty bad."

Speaking of people with Sara's turn of mind, and her excellent head for money, I see that my old pal Jim Lake, of Robinson, Lake, Lerer and Montgomery, PR monsters, has been named deputy head of the Bush campaign. Nice. Lake's firm not only repped BCCI and tried to explain what great guys they were. No, he and his partners also desperately tried to get the taxpayers of America to buy ever more billions of Drexel junk through the FSLIC, by touting it to the nation's legislators and media honchos. That is, Lake not only was there for "spin control" after the oil spilled. He was in the tanker pumping it out onto the shore. And Bush thinks he's the guy to present his best face to the voters and taxpayers. Very sweet, Poppy.

Saturday

A four a.m. call from Sonja. I heard it from the bedroom as it came on the answering machine.

"Sara really likes you," she said. "She thinks you're very good with money. In the meantime, I've got a problem because I'm supposed to do a body double shot on a movie where the star I'm working with is married to a guy I've gone out with for ten years. So you see the problem."

I made breakfast for Tommy, Weight Watchers French toast. He sat and looked at it with his sweet, four-year-old face.

I had already eaten, so I took out a Diet Cream Soda. "No, Daddy," he said. "Soda is bad for you. Orange juice is good for you."

I was interrupted by my pal W., calling from Arizona. "I can't tell you what a great day this is," he said. "I just sold that Jetstar that I'd been trying to sell for a year, the one that I have a \$200,000 loan on from Chase that they're driving me crazy about. I just got the cashier's check this morning. What a relief."

"Great," I said. "Now you can turn the money over to Chase and they'll stop bugging you."

"Are you crazy?" W. asked in a combination laugh and gasp. "I'm sending my chauffeur to the Cayman Islands to put that money in my bank account. I don't feel like I owe Chase a damned thing. I'm gonna need that money for

when I go into receivership and the banks attach my bank accounts."

You see how bad I am with money.

Sunday

I used to wonder how and why people who were not always striving, always slugging it out, got up in the morning. What's worth living for if you aren't actively seeking to be famous or rich or both?

I found out. Young Psycho, as I call Tommy, had a butterfly net his Mommy had given him. He spent the morning running around my meager property here in Malibu looking for butterflies, and then helping the gardeners. "I go help Señor pull up weeds," he said.

I took him to lunch at the Malibu Riding and Tennis Club, which has a swimming pool where Young Handsome swims while I watch him like a hawk. We ate at the bar. I had a chicken breast and he had French toast. He ate his French toast and then just spooned maple syrup out of a cup into his sweet

mouth. "Tommy," I said, "that's a lot of sugar."

"It's not a problem for me, Daddy," he said. "I'm not old and fat."

After lunch, Tommy, Trixie, and I walked up a riding trail. Up ahead there were swarms of yellow butterflies. Tommy ran after them. By a miracle of luck and young coordination, he actually snagged one in his net and started to jump up and down with excitement. The butterfly flew out of the net and went home to tell a story to its pals. Tommy ran back and forth, waving his net, singing, "Daddy, I caught one, a monarch, I caught one." I told him he was a good boy for letting it go.

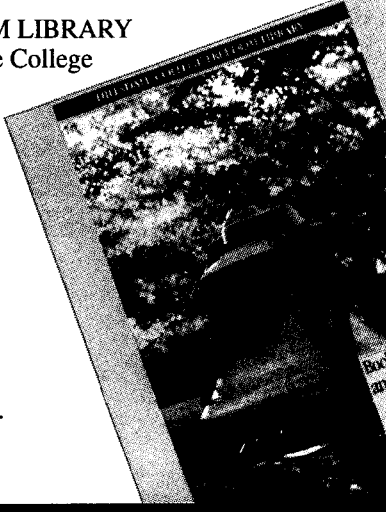
Later we walked along Zuma Beach, with Tommy still carrying his net. He walked about ten feet behind me in the sand, carefully stepping into the huge holes my enormous feet had left. "I'm following you, Daddy," he said. "See? I'm stepping in your footsteps. Can you see, Daddy?" □

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Doubting Thomas Again

by Terry Eastland

To the videotape we go, specifically to Paula Zahn of "CBS This Morning." She's on the air with National Public Radio's Nina Totenberg, one of the two reporters who, drinking deeply of a most poisonous leak, first spread the Anita Hill stuff. Zahn says there are reports that Totenberg is "still investigating" Justice Clarence Thomas. She asks: "What can you tell us about that?" and "When will we see more? . . . A month down the road, a couple of months down the road?" This is an interview? Here is the hardball question Zahn should have asked: Just why is it not in the public interest for us to know who leaked the Hill allegations?

Zahn's anti-Thomas posturing reflects a widely held presumption within the Fourth Estate: *There must be more dirt out there on Judge Thomas.* But as I write in mid-March, there is nothing on Thomas, although there is plenty on Hill, as readers of this journal well know. David Brock's piece in the March *TAS* should have been followed up by the networks, even by Paula Zahn, but Brock's enterprising reporting has not been matched by any major media.

Instead, press pundits have been hyperventilating over what Thomas has actually been doing on the bench. The newest Justice sided with large majorities in interpreting the Voting Rights Act and the Immigration and Naturalization Act in ways that Nat Hentoff, for example, did not like. "Clarence Thomas Joins the Wrecking Crew," his column in the *Washington Post* was headlined. Thomas had yet, however, to throw a wrecking

ball himself, in the form of an opinion of major importance. That happened in February, when the Justice completed unfinished business at the D.C. court of appeals by issuing an opinion holding unconstitutional a government policy that favored woman applicants for broadcast licenses. "Justice Thomas's Late Hit," opined the *New York Times*. The editorialists were just warming up. Two days later, the *Times* hit Thomas again, in a lead editorial, no less, entitled "The Youngest, Cruellest Justice."

What outraged the *Times*, and also the *Washington Post*, along with William Raspberry, Mary McGrory, Clarence Page, and other syndicated columnists, was Thomas's dissent in a case from Louisiana, *Hudson v. McMillian*. Following an argument with prison guards, inmate Keith Hudson had been handcuffed and shackled, and then beaten, suffering bruises, swelling, and loosened teeth (none of which required medical attention). In her opinion for the 7-2 majority, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor wrote that excessive force against a prisoner may constitute "cruel and unusual punishment" in violation of the Eighth Amendment, even though the inmate does not suffer serious injury. Thomas, joined in his dissent by Justice Antonin Scalia, disagreed.

Thomas's reading of the case law and the Constitution was hardly idiosyncratic, and the conclusion he drew was by no means far-fetched. All three judges on the appeals court below, in fact, had seen the issues in much the same light. But to read Thomas's critics, you would have thought he'd gone off the deep end. Not one acknowledged that his opinion was well within the realm of legitimate argument. Nor did most critics even attempt to rebut his reasoning. Instead they characterized his writing as

"bizarre" (Raspberry), "mind-boggling" (the *Post*), and "disgusting" (McGrory). Worse, Thomas himself was made out to be a man who just might condone prison beatings such as Keith Hudson endured so long as the victim did not suffer serious injury. I looked in vain for pundits who disagreed with Thomas yet who were fair-minded enough to acknowledge his stated view of such beatings as Hudson received and the legal recourse the inmate had.

"A use of force that causes only insignificant harm to a prisoner," Thomas wrote near the top of his opinion, "may be immoral, it may be tortious, it may be criminal, and it may even be remediable under other provisions of the federal Constitution, but it is not 'cruel and unusual punishment.'" In a similar vein, at the end of his opinion, Thomas stated that abusive behavior by prison guards is "deplorable conduct that properly evokes outrage and contempt," but does not necessarily deserve the stamp of Eighth Amendment unconstitutionality. As though to drive the point home for slow readers (Raspberry, McGrory?), Thomas added that "to reject the notion that the infliction of concededly 'minor' injuries can be considered either 'cruel' or 'unusual' 'punishment' . . . is not to say that it amounts to acceptable conduct. Rather it is to recognize that primary responsibility for preventing and punishing such conduct rests not with the federal Constitution but with the laws and regulations of the various states." Thomas specifically noted that Keith Hudson could have sought but did not seek redress for his injuries under state law, and that there might be a Fourteenth Amendment due process violation if Louisiana's available remedies were inadequate.

Ignoring his nuanced argument, Thomas's critics suggested that a judge should decide cases on some basis other

Terry Eastland is resident fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C. His latest book, Energy in the Executive: The Case for the Strong Presidency, will be published this summer by the Free Press.

than what the judge conscientiously believes is correct law. That of course is a preposterous view of the judge's task, but here were McGrory et al. essentially urging Thomas to decide cases by remembering his roots. Thomas was "born an underdog and has forgotten all about what it was like," wrote McGrory. We had hoped that Thomas "would bring to the Court the understanding bred of hardship," intoned the *New York Times*. Raspberry harrumphed, "I was prepared to see you put a compassionate face on conservatism." *Hudson* would have been "an easy chance to show that you could read into the Constitution and prior court decrees at least as much compassion as the white conservatives on the court."

As has been his wont of late, Raspberry stumbled past the essence of the matter: For if the Constitution is something you read *into*, as opposed to something you try to read on its own terms, then law is politics and politics law, and never the twain shall part. This, of course, is the implicit view of so many in the press, which may explain why Thomas's opinion in *Dawson v. Delaware* two weeks later was received mostly in silence by his critics.

Escaped from a Delaware prison, David Dawson stole a car, committed burglary, and brutally killed a woman. He was convicted of first-degree murder and other crimes. At sentencing, the state introduced evidence of Dawson's membership in the Aryan Brotherhood, a violent, white supremacist prison gang. The jury was thus able to consider it along with Dawson's mitigating evidence—that he had been kind to family members and had earned good-time credits in prison for enrolling in drug and alcohol programs. Dawson was sentenced to death. Writing for the eight-member majority, Chief Justice William Rehnquist overturned the death penalty. Delaware, he said, violated Dawson's First Amendment rights; his membership in the Aryan Brotherhood was irrelevant to the murder, since the victim was white, and to his character, since the evidence did not prove that the Aryan Brotherhood had committed or endorsed unlawful or violent acts.

Disagreeing, Thomas wrote: "A jury reasonably could conclude from Dawson's membership in a prison gang that he had engaged in some sort of forbidden

activities while in prison," adding that the evidence "tended to establish future dangerousness" and "to rebut Dawson's attempt to show that he was kind to others." Thomas thus sided against a white racist—an outcome that should have made Raspberry and company happy. But he also had sided against a convicted felon who, like Keith Hudson, was petitioning for his constitutional rights—a fact that took the tongue away from any critics inclined to toss him a word of praise. What, after all, is a results-oriented pundit to do when a white racist sentenced to death invokes the First Amendment?

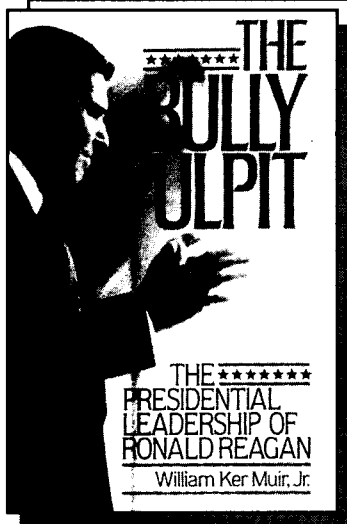
By mid-March Thomas had written four opinions, one concurring opinion, and three dissents for the Court—eight essays on the law—despite having missed the first twenty arguments of the term, thanks to Anita Hill. Thomas has already proved more prolific than most rookie Justices—David Souter, who missed no arguments during his first year, had written only one opinion at this stage of his first year. Thomas has proved

courageous, willing to stick to his reading of the law in *Hudson* despite the uproar he surely knew it would provoke, and willing even to stand alone, as witness his solitary dissent in *Dawson*. Thomas's votes are almost the same as Scalia's, as is his approach to the law. The thought of another Scalia enrages Thomas's pundit-critics, for Scalia is dedicated to reading the law, not deciding cases according to whatever one thinks is the politically sympathetic party. "Scalia puppet" is the latest term of scorn preferred by Thomas's foes, even though the newest Justice stood all by himself in *Dawson*, not a posture novice Justices normally adopt. Soon, I suppose, Thomas will be savaged for not being a team player.

The current Supreme Court term will not close until the end of June, but if Thomas continues in the fashion in which he has begun, he can expect more ad hominem attacks from the likes of McGrory, Raspberry, and the *New York Times* editorial page. Judging by what Thomas showed when Anita Hill attacked, I'd say he'll survive just fine. □

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Who Will Pay?

by Cathy Young

Even as Richard Nixon argues for more aid to help Russia stay the Yeltsin course, debate continues over whether that course is the correct one. At the Cato Institute's tenth Monetary Conference in Washington this March, economist Nikolai Petrakov—who resigned from Gorbachev's advisory council in January 1991 to protest the Vilnius crackdown and the general "rightward" turn—argued that Yeltsin's reformers had been wrong to think Russia could replicate Poland's "shock therapy" without taking into account two crucial factors: the bloated military sector of the Soviet (and Russian) economy, which had no counterpart anywhere in Eastern Europe; and Poland's vast agricultural private sector. As a result, price decontrol without privatization has led to dizzying inflation and a drop in production (food production is down 31 percent), since monopolies are determined to keep supply low enough to maintain high prices.

But is this an actual decline, or merely a transfer of resources to private-sector production, not included in the official statistics? Particularly rattled by Petrakov's remarks was Czechoslovakia's legendary finance minister Vaclav Klaus, the hardcore Friedmanite, who remarked that competition was impossible without free prices. Judy Shelton of the Hoover Institution (and author of *The Coming Soviet Crash*) took Petrakov's side, noting that privatization should have followed right on the heels of the lifting of price controls. Worst of all, she said, if the authorities in Russia

catch on that their largest revenues are coming from the sale of food and consumer goods at exorbitant prices, they won't be very eager to let go of the food trade.

Optimism? Or Old Russian Fatalism?

The mood in Russia may be less desperate than the doomsayers suggest. The *Independent Gazette* published a January poll of about 7,500 people in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and the provincial town of Samara (until recently Kuibyshev), revealing mixed feelings on Yeltsin. On the question of whether the president's policies were conducive to the country's economic revival, 43 percent in Moscow, 40 percent in St. Petersburg, and 36 percent in Samara said yes; 32 percent, 34 percent, and 36 percent respectively said no; and the rest were undecided. The St. Petersburg sociologists who helped conduct the poll note that Yeltsin's negative ratings are only 4 percent higher than they

were last November—a small price to pay for reforms that allowed only 15 percent of those surveyed to maintain their usual diet.

Predictably, the better-educated and those employed in the private sector were more likely to view Yeltsin's economic policies favorably. More curious is that he got high ratings from students and professionals working in the humanities—i.e., people whose fortunes these days are presumably far from stellar. In Moscow, these groups were even more supportive of Yeltsin than private-sector employees.

And while it is the most conventional of wisdoms that older people are not only nostalgic for Communist ideals but also the hardest hit by the lifting of price controls, an "age gap" in Yeltsin's disfavor showed up only in St. Petersburg, where 36 percent of respondents over 60 expected positive change from Yeltsin's reforms, as opposed to 40 percent of the under-30 crowd and 42 percent of those 30 to 45. In Moscow and in Samara, the gap actually went the other way. What's going on? Could it be that the elderly—who lived through Communism's darkest years—are less favorably disposed to Marxian ideology than is commonly supposed? Or are they simply more inclined to support whoever is in power?

On February 10, *Izvestia* reported an improvement in the public mood, based on polls conducted in Moscow by the oddly named Institute for the Sociology of Parliamentarianism. Throughout January, wrote Institute director Nuzgar Betaneli, polls had registered an alarming growth in people's dissatisfaction with their lives:



Cathy Young is the author of *Growing Up in Moscow* (Ticknor & Fields).

from 61 percent on January 9 to 71 percent on January 16 to 81 percent on January 30. The number of Muscovites who said current price levels were "beyond endurance" grew from 25 percent on January 2 to 46 percent in late January. A February 8 survey, however, brought pleasant surprises. The number of people dissatisfied with their lives was back at 71 percent, and "only" 39 percent felt that inflation was beyond endurance. Yeltsin's approval rating stood at 54 percent, and confidence in his economic policies was up four points.

This poll was taken on the eve of the two rival demonstrations in Moscow—pro-Yeltsin and anti-Yeltsin—and the respondents were also asked which rally they sympathized with. Only 10 percent sided with those demanding the resignation of the Yeltsin government, while 56 percent took the side of its defenders, 16 percent said they weren't sure, and 18 percent wished a pox on both their houses.

The demonstrations took place as scheduled, without incident (the beating of pro-Communist, red banner-wielding protesters by police, eerily suggestive of the final years of Czarist Russia, occurred two weeks later). The Communist-nationalist alliance, according to the *Independent Gazette*, mustered about 40,000 people on Manezh Square, while the pro-democracy rally in front of the Russian White House drew 60,000. A columnist in the ultra-nationalist weekly *Literaturnaya Rossiya* had fun skewering the democracy crowd. Writing under the *nom de plume* of Obyvatel ("Philistine"), he scoffed at some of its signs, such as "Ex-Prisoners of Psycho Wards Support Yeltsin"—which, one must admit, could have been worded a bit less ambiguously.

Meanwhile, some Communists have discovered a very Western political weapon: the lawsuit. In the interesting weekly *Nasha Rossiya*, or "Our Russia," a front-page appeal from one D. Loseva, "a reasonable woman of sound mind raised according to Soviet standards and morals," urging that Mikhail Gorbachev be put on trial for crimes including "the treacherous destruction of the Great Soviet State," the corruption of youth, and neglect of presidential duties, is followed by the text of a suit filed by one Andrei Perov against the Russian government and President Yeltsin. Comrade

Perov, a Communist party member since 1958, wants his party dues reimbursed—or at least the 2,287 rubles and 90 kopecks paid since 1973 for which he has exact records—now that the CP has been dismantled. It's not that he has any regrets about paying his party dues; on the contrary, Comrade Perov is indignant at the Russian government's seizure of party assets, including his own hard-earned rubles. "I do not want my property to be handed over to the new bureaucracy," he states, adding that he reserves the right to file other suits based on the same thorny problem—for the reimbursement of his pre-1973 dues and even for the inflation-adjustment of the monies in question.

A poem nearby, by Rostov resident V. Dyachenko, entitled "Open Letter to the General Secretary," advises all Communists to take similar action against Gorbachev. No translation can do justice to the angry versifier's genius, but one can try:

I paid my dues without skipping,
Of course I wasn't alone;
But the question arises: What happened
To the money that was my own?
Why did I feed you and clothe you
And give my modest mite
So you could have personal limos?
Your dachas, too, are all right.

Sensitivity Lessons

The mystifying sign carried by one of the pro-democracy demonstrators on February 9, "Curses on the Stalinist Homosexual Communists," invited not only ridicule from Obyvatel but censure from *Independent Gazette* reporter Anna Ostapchuk, who wrote (February 11) that such a slogan "certainly did not attest to open-mindedness or democratic views." (She noted, however, that the sign belonged to someone in a group of young people in punk outfits.) As far as I know, this is the first time that a democratic Russian newspaper has implied that anti-homosexual comments are beyond the bounds of civility, which indicates—to the chagrin, no doubt, of some of the people who wished for the downfall of the Soviet empire—that the meaning of the word "progressive" is at least sometimes beginning to coincide in Russia and in the United States.

Moving further in the direction of political correctness, American-style,

Moskovsky Komsomolets (February 14) ran an article on the problem of sexual harassment. An *Independent Gazette* commentator had noted, writing about Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill, that the typical ex-Soviet lady "gets nervous and starts showing a decline in productivity" if no one has pinched her behind by the end of the workday. *Moskovsky Komsomolets* columnist Alexei Mitrofanov takes a more gentlemanly view, lamenting the wiles of managers who ask their secretaries to work late and "bald-headed toothless professors" who invite women students home for tutoring before final exams. "Is it time, perhaps, to stop choosing between the loss of dignity and the loss of a job?" inquires Mitrofanov, urging victims to contact a group of researchers launching Russia's first study of sexual harassment in the workplace. Given that Russian women have always had plenty of legitimate complaints on this score, it's a laudable idea—provided it doesn't reach the point where Russians once again have to wonder if there's an informer in their midst before they tell a heretical joke. □

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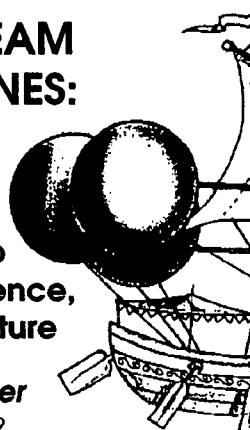
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The Multicultural Multiplex

by James Bowman

Election year reminds us how terrifying it is when the political beast is not driven snarling back into its cage with whip and gun but allowed to roam abroad and terrorize people who are trying to get on with ordinary life. Clowns like Bill Clinton and George Bush go about trying to please every imaginable constituency, as if the wacko demands of NOW or the America Firsters had come straight out of their own most deeply held convictions, and any sense of what is good for the country as a whole is forgotten for the duration.

If the circus did nothing more than determine the fate of our national wealth and defense, I could bear to watch it with a good humor. But when it begins to dominate the arts and education, I am tempted to despair. Where is there escape from politics once the "multiculturalist" begins dividing the world up into "minority" constituencies, each with its own proprietary culture? Let us experience other cultures by all means, but let's also remember that what gives them value is not the ethnic or sexual identity of their creators but the extent to which they are rooted in universal experience.

Even in the movies these days you can hear the old Pander Bear growling in the background, and this month there is a particularly large collection of special-interest films which, even where they are otherwise good, in some ways are meant to exclude the rest of us in order to stroke the political dignity of some moviegoing constituency or other. The Women's Picture has always been around, of course, but now more aggressively claims to stand on equal terms with real art. The latest of the genre is

This is My Life, by Nora Ephron, the story of a single mother and cosmetics saleswoman, played by Julie Kavner, who decides to risk all to become a stand-up comedienne.

Do not try this at home! It may be that there are rather dumpy single mothers who have come out of nowhere to make it big in stand-up, but if there are they are rare. Girls are allowed their impossible dreams too, I admit, but this is not a picture about the achievement of the dream. This saleswoman's success is pretty much taken for granted, since the stand-up routine, what we see of it, is not even funny, unless with an esoteric female humor that I don't get. It is rather a picture about sisterhood, about keeping the kids on board, giving them "life lessons," etc. Altogether a girl thing, I guess.

Black Pictures are almost as common as Women's Pictures these days, though black women's pictures like Julie Dash's *Daughters of the Dust* are still a rarity. The film is evocative of the period (1902) in which the residually African way of life of the Gullahs, ex-slaves from the sea islands of South Carolina and Georgia, all but disappeared in the northbound migration. The aged matriarch (Cora Lee Day) sees herself as charged with keeping the culture alive in the diaspora, just as women had kept it alive under slavery. As it consists of weird voodoo-like rituals and ancestor worship, however, it is hard to wish their efforts well, unless you are really very strongly into multicultural non-discrimination. But the photography is nice, and much of the dialogue is happily incomprehensible.

Mississippi Masala is another Black Picture, though made by the Indian, Mira Nair, who did *Salaam Bombay*. Everything about it is interesting except for its emotional resonance, which seems pretty

much limited to those, like its Indian family expelled from Uganda by Idi Amin in 1972, whose lives are defined by the fact that they are "people of color"—i.e., of the wrong color. At one point, Denzel Washington, who plays the Mississippi black man who falls in love with the daughter of the family (Sarita Choudhury), says to the girl's father (Roshan Seth): "I'm Mississippi born and bred; there ain't nothin' you can tell me about racial hatred."

A member of one minority insists to a member of another minority that his minority has suffered just as much as the other's minority. That is a lot of what the film is about. If you're not a member of either minority it's kind of hard to get into. If it weren't for the acting of Washington, Choudhury, and Seth, it would be very tedious stuff indeed, but they are all such attractive characters in their own way that both the love story and the bitterness of the Ugandan exile are made believable, though not as affecting as they ought to be.

Latino Pictures look like being the next minority fashion. To appreciate *American Me*, you need to be not only Hispanic but a convict as well. People who haven't been in the big house cannot possibly imagine what it is like, which makes it just the sort of subject the multicultural movie-makers want. *The Mambo Kings*, by Arne Glimcher, is much more accessible, but it still seems to me to be a minority picture. Two Cuban brothers (Armand Assante and Antonio Banderas) come to the U.S. in the 1950s and start a band. They land a spot on "I Love Lucy" as pals of Ricky's (played here by Desi Arnaz, Jr.) and for a while they ride that era's wave of popularity for Latin American dancing before coming to grief for reasons that

James Bowman, The American Spectator's movie critic, is the American editor of the Times Literary Supplement.

remain more or less obscure to us non-Latinos.

It is something to do with pride and honor and sexual jealousy and a strong sense of family—things associated with those hot-blooded Latins, you know. You can spot the romance, the charm, the danger, and the attractiveness of the grand, self-destructive gesture on behalf of their proud independence, but somehow it all doesn't add up to a dramatic conflict that will be comprehensible to anyone whose cultural roots are planted north of the Rio Grande and the Straits of Florida. As in *Mississippi Masala*, the acting—together with some exciting music by Robert Kraft—keeps the interest alive, but the whole must be judged an artistic failure if you have to be Hispanic to understand it.

Women's Pictures, Black Pictures, Latino Pictures are all Johnny-come-latelys in Hollywood compared with Youth Pictures. I suppose it could be argued that, because even if we are not women, blacks, or Latinos we are all young at some point, Youth Pictures are not in quite the same category of minority-interest flicks. But the big hit among early spring movies, *Wayne's World*, is so full of in-jokes and adolescent humor that it makes those who don't go for that sort of thing feel as incorrigibly unhip as a Latino at a black film festival.

For though much has been made of the stupidity of the two heroes, Wayne and Garth (Mike Myers and Dana Carvey), the whole enterprise depends upon their knowing complicity with the audience, who to understand them must be plugged in to the same mindless world of junk television and heavy metal music. Pop culture is thus simultaneously mocked and revered while the sometimes funny but always arch jokes and the youth-cult neologisms cut those in the know off from everyone else. Wayne and Garth's stupidity, in which the film glories, is really a kind of sly superiority. It isolates them and their admirers from common experience. The hip and the cool are the ultimate in privileged minorities.

In the end, it is probably not politics or multiculturalism or the end of Western Civilization as we know it that is responsible for all this imaginative exclusion. Maybe it is just ordinary, mediocre art. Films, like other artistic es-

says, are based on somebody's partial experience, and only the somebodies who have a really outstanding artistic gift—i.e., those who are in the minority of artists in all ages—have the ability to make their experience genuinely universal. My Film of the Month, Peter Chelsom's *Hear My Song*, may not be great art—it is too light and sentimental for that—but it is a thoroughly entertaining example of how the most unpromisingly exotic material can be made accessible to the human generality.

To start with, it is full of weird dislocations that, like an Irish version of "magic realism," place us in a world whose non-existence is the guarantee of its universality. No minority can stick its flag in the sands of the Republic of Imagination. A less skilled artist could have ended up with one of those fanciful science-fiction worlds whose non-exis-



tence is the only good thing about it, but Chelsom has the requisite lightness of touch. Always wonderfully impossible and sometimes hilariously funny things happen here, but the people are completely true to life.

The story is as complicated as only an Irishman could make it. Mickey O'Neill (Adrian Dunbar) is a young nightclub proprietor in Liverpool with a gift for the blarney that is wearing thin among his nearest and dearest. He is so used to charming people that he thinks he can get away with booking an act by an awful singer called Franc Cinatra whom people won't be able to tell from his namesake. In danger of losing his club unless he gets in an act that his fed-up landladies like, he settles with typical chicanery on a "Mr. X," who may or may not be the famous Irish tenor Josef Locke, who escaped to Ireland one step

ahead of the taxman twenty-five years before.

The real Josef Locke is "a bigger draw than the pope," a singer before whom women weep. And behind whom. Forsaken when Locke fled to Ireland was Kathleen Doyle (Shirley Anne Field), Miss Dairy Goodness of 1958, who has never been able to forget him. She is also, coincidentally, the mother of Mickey's girlfriend Nancy (Tara Fitzgerald). When Kathleen goes up to Mr. X's room to relight the old flame, she comes back down humiliated by the discovery that the man is an imposter. Both Mickey's nightclub and his romance are finished at a stroke.

Mickey decides that the only thing to be done to recover them is to go to Ireland and find the real Josef Locke (Ned Beatty, of all people), who is living in retirement as a country squire, and persuade him to return to England for a comeback performance. With the help of some more magic and a friend who is a Dublin theatrical agent (James Nesbitt), he does so. The final scene has a Fellini-like visual quality as Mr. X/Josef Locke in his Zorro hat and cape is hoisted through the roof of a crumbling theater astride a wrecking ball that the manic Chief Inspector Abbott (David McCallum) tries to commandeer from Franc Cinatra but can't operate. Locke escapes with the beautiful and long-lost Kathleen, his taxes still unpaid.

It does the heart good to see a film whose romantic hero is a tax rebel. Not only does it strike a blow against multiculturalism, and so help to contain the encroachment of politics upon ordinary life, but it also supports those who would roll back the frontiers of the high-tax state. It's enough to make you want to call it a conservative movie. But then any movie whose humor is accessible to all and which laughs at fine sounding nonsense is a conservative movie. Mickey sounds like Bill Clinton when he butters up old folks by saying: "I'm 30. I was born in peacetime. I haven't been where you've been, seen what you've seen . . ." To Nancy he says, with great profundity: "There are givers and there are takers: I've found a kind of giving in my taking." She rightly replies: "Bulls--t!" Anything this funny has got to be subversive of all political priggery, too. Go see it if you can. And long live the Revolution! ■

Beware of books with the word "sex" in the title. You could find yourself being told that "sexual reproduction is a low-risk strategy analogous to that of an investor who holds a diversified portfolio of securities." While there are doubtless economists who might find such an assertion titillating,

you would not want to be in the same room with them. But economic analogies come easily to the legal scholar and circuit court judge Richard Posner, one of the founders of the "law and economics" movement that arose in the early sixties. Law-and-economics theorists span the ideological spectrum but share the view that economic analysis is useful in understanding law and its effects. In previous books, Posner has applied the tools of economics to questions of judicial decision-making, the role of the courts, the relation between law and morality, and the limits of interpretation. *Sex and Reason* addresses the relationship between biology and culture, the regulation of sexual behavior, and the value of marriage and conventional morality.

Posner was moved to write this book when it dawned on him that judges "know next to nothing" about sex outside their own limited experience—more limited than that of most people, he suggests. Yet they are confronted with a growing number of cases involving complicated sexual issues. Posner wishes to provide a "theory of sexuality that both explains the principal regularities in the practice of sex and in its social, including legal, regulation and points the way toward reforms in that regulation." The theory, says Posner, will be grounded in libertarian values and will rely on a "functional, secular, instrumental, utilitarian" mode of analysis.

Posner begins with the assumption that human sexuality is a mix of givens and choices. Givens include the sex

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SEX AND REASON

Richard A. Posner

Harvard University Press/458 pages/\$29.95

reviewed by ELIZABETH KRISTOL

drive, general differences between male and female sexuality, and the existence of homosexuality. Choices include individual sexual behavior and the ways in which cultures encourage or deter that behavior. Posner quickly moves to demystify sex; it is, he insists, subject to the same guiding principle as all other human activity: "rational man goes where the balance of costs and benefits inclines." For example, he suggests that sexual diversity flourishes in cities because a large and concentrated population reduces the "search costs" of finding a suitable sex partner. Cities also offer more privacy and anonymity than small towns, so there are fewer deterrents to aberrant behavior. Homosexual promiscuity, Posner theorizes, may reflect the costs of public intolerance; to avoid the risk of conducting relationships openly, homosexuals "will tend to substitute the sex act, which can be performed in a very short time and in private, for courtship, which is public and protracted." He also speculates that effeminacy may be a form of signaling, a "device for reducing the costs of sexual search." When people find their search for an appropriate mate obstructed, Posner says, they channel their drives into other areas, such as fetishism, voyeurism, or rape.

According to Posner, the single factor that most complicates the calculus of costs and benefits in the area of sex is the institution of "companionate" marriage—the notion, promoted by the early Christian church, that marriage should be founded on love and be a genuine partnership between husband and wife. This form of marriage greatly elevated the status of women from that in pagan societies, but accord-

ing to Posner it has had some unfortunate side-effects. It "problematized" a host of behaviors, including homosexuality, adultery, and prostitution, that were ignored or tolerated when arranged marriages were the norm. It helped foster a homosexual subculture, since homosexuals who would have married

in a system of non-companionate marriage found it difficult to do so when marriage demanded a high level of emotional and sexual intimacy. But the most profound effect of companionate marriage, Posner asserts, was the development of a puritan sexual morality that came into being to discourage husbands and their newly liberated wives from straying.

Marriage, in this view, is only as secure as the morality that keeps the struggling spouses in line. When moral or religious forces decline, as they have in most contemporary Western nations, societies may turn to law to regulate sexual behavior. This is a tendency that Posner the libertarian vigorously opposes. The state, he says, should regard sex as "morally indifferent." It should adopt the same laissez-faire attitude toward sex as toward any other activity, restricting it "only to the extent required by economic or other utilitarian considerations." These considerations, in his view, do not justify banning prostitution or most forms of pornography, or restricting the freedom of homosexuals to hold certain jobs or to adopt children. The battles surrounding surrogate motherhood cases could be avoided, says Posner, if only contracts were rigorously enforced. And he notes that the current adoption picture, with thousands of parents waiting years to adopt a baby or resorting to a black market, could be improved by shifting to a free market in baby-selling—or what he demurely prefers to call "parental-rights" selling.

Posner's clinical detachment leads him down some strange paths. His discussion of rape is especially cold-blooded. He struggles with the difficulty of producing a utilitarian justification for criminalizing rape (since the pleasure a sadistic rapist

gains from the act may exceed the pain of his victim) and finally comes up with three possible justifications: the rapist is a "sex thief"; rape increases the amount of fear in a community; and rape raises the cost of self-protective measures. True to his ground rules, sympathy for the victim and moral disgust are not allowed to dominate the calculus.

Posner's treatment of date rape is even less satisfying. He doubts that tougher laws against date rape would help women, since it is a difficult charge to prove. Moreover, he adds, the "median woman" might suffer if there were more stringent penalties for date rape. According to Posner, men would be deterred from dating by the specter of rape accusations, and women would respond to this decline in their social life by becoming more aggressive about initiating dates. This analysis reflects a peculiar view of women: it is not at all clear that they would rather maintain a fixed level of dating than screen out potential rapists—even if that means spending a few more evenings at home with a *Lean Cuisine*. Posner's relatively cavalier treatment of date rape is especially strange, given his casual assertion, earlier in *Sex and Reason*, that "quite normal" men would rape if there were no laws against it.

Moral revulsion may play a small role in the utilitarian analysis of rape, but it makes a number of surprise appearances elsewhere in *Sex and Reason*. In his treatment of homosexual marriage, for example, Posner is willing to take into account public prejudice against homosexuality. He fears that legalizing homosexual marriage would appear to sanction behavior that many people disapprove of. It would also put government in the "dishonest position" of painting an overly rosy picture of homosexual life. Finally, it would create certain "information costs"—for example, "if we invite people to a party and ask them to bring their spouses, we know that each man will either come alone or bring a woman and that each woman will either come alone or bring a man. . . . [This understanding] would be upset by permitting homosexual marriage." Only in the looking-glass world of utilitarian thinking can one downplay the impact of rape on its victim while fretting over the

impact of homosexual marriage on a dinner party.

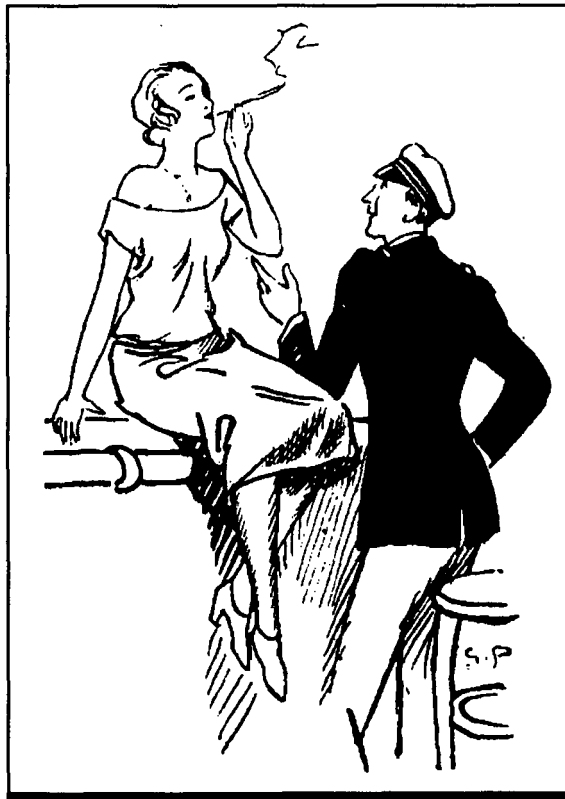
The infinite malleability of utilitarianism is most glaring in Posner's treatment of abortion. He goes through the motions of presenting an excruciatingly objective analysis, even weighing the possibility that abortion may actually *save* lives. If abortion were outlawed, he reasons, society would become overpopulated sooner, and people would refrain from having children; thus, "children would not be born who would have been born had abortions been permitted in the earlier period." This analysis leads him to ponder the contention that "abortion kills, as it were, only half a child," since when one factors in questions of timing and replacement value, it takes

gal abortion, and to these women's other children, present or future."

Posner concludes that the economic-utilitarian analysis of abortion is inconclusive. "We need a tiebreaker, a method for allocating the risk of nonpersuasion, such as a preference for limited government. . . . No impartial tiebreaker suggests itself." But the game was rigged from the start: all the variables in Posner's seemingly neutral economic calculus were of his own design, and had he programmed different factors into the calculus, or assigned them different values, he could have averted a stalemate. The notion of a "tiebreaker" seems especially disingenuous, given that the rest of *Sex and Reason* supports a pro-choice position and seems to do so for reasons other than the default setting of libertarianism.

Posner's pro-choice sympathies are underscored in his chapter "The Sexual Revolution in the Courts." Here Posner develops his vision of a judiciary that plays an activist role, not only in removing unnecessary restrictions on sexual liberty, but in reshaping American attitudes about human sexuality. Posner has high praise for the 1965-77 Supreme Court for creating a constitutional right of "sexual autonomy"; *Roe v. Wade* in particular "emerges as a statement of social policy congruent with the model of morally indifferent sex." Posner's only regret is that, by lumping sexual behavior under the rubric of "privacy" rather than "liberty," the Court shied away from explicitly endorsing sexual freedom. This, Posner charges, was "an attempt by semantic legerdemain to make sexual liberty appear to occupy a different plane of social value from economic liberty. It does not." Posner also criticizes Justice Blackmun's opinion for failing to

"dramatize the hardships" of a woman forced to carry her fetus to term: "There is no mention of the woman who is raped, who is poor, or whose fetus is deformed. There is no reference to the death of women from illegal abortions." (This is a strange burst of compassion from someone who regards a rapist as a "sex thief.") Posner is gloomy about the fate of sexual liberty under the current Court: it will be many years, he laments, before the Supreme Court "again takes



1.83 abortions to reduce the population by one. He takes a stab at some quantitative analysis of his own, positing that "the benefits of prohibition are therefore v , the value of one fetus saved, times $.16n$ ($.3/1.83 = .16$), where n is the average number of abortions that would be performed each year but for the prohibition." These benefits, he says, must be traded off against "the costs, unrelated to death, to pregnant mothers who would have gotten a legal abortion but would not risk an ille-

up the cudgels on behalf of sexual liberty."

For a brief shining period, though, "the Supreme Court had set the United States on a course of convergence with Sweden in matters related to sex." For Posner there can be no higher praise. Over and over in *Sex and Reason* Posner extols the virtues of the Swedish approach to sex. The problem with the United States, he says, is that we live in a confusing no-man's-land between permissiveness and repression. On the policy level we allow teenagers to obtain contraceptives, have abortions, and receive welfare assistance for their illegitimate children, but our public rhetoric still reflects puritanical sexual values. Sweden, however, has liberated itself from both public regulation of sexual behavior and traditional mores, and has thereby taken "a big step toward the model of morally indifferent sex." Sweden has even avoided the unfortunate by-products of companionate marriage, since in Sweden legal marriage—"a relationship imposing rights and duties that cannot be altered by contract"—has largely given way to contractual cohabitation, which is open to heterosexuals and homosexuals alike. A widespread replacement of conventional marriage with contractual relationships, says Posner, would make "the current realities of marriage transparent."

In one of the many footnotes in *Sex and Reason*, Posner states that his endorsement of morally indifferent sex applies only to "the public or political side of morality." But it is clear that Posner would like to eliminate much of the moral baggage from the private realm as well. He repeatedly praises Bertrand Russell, who in his 1929 book *Marriage and Morals* argued for more liberated attitudes toward premarital sex, sexual relations within marriage, and the sexual education of children. Posner agrees with Russell that Christian morality has done much harm. *Sex and Reason* is full of references to the "dysfunctionality" and "prudishness" of Christian sex ethics, and to the "puritanical attitudes" that prevail in "monotheistic" cultures. In an especially cheap shot, Posner takes on, as his sole example of Christian moral thought, the dated and discredited writings of Anita Bryant. Fortunately, says Posner, we now have the means to

slough off the vestiges of conventional morality: the "acid bath of economics" can help us peel away "layers of ignorance, ideology, superstition, and prejudice." Moral convictions, Posner implies, are largely a product of ignorance. "Were that ignorance dispelled, we might move rapidly toward the model of morally indifferent sex."

Posner admits that some of the policies he would favor to dispel ignorance are not exactly libertarian. Again, Sweden provides the inspiration: "The Swedish experience suggests that an aggressive program of explicit sex education, coupled with an aggressive program of making contraceptives available to teenagers, can reduce the rate of pregnancy to low levels in a teenage population that is even more active sexually than the corresponding American population." What makes the Swedish effort so effective, says Posner, is that the atti-



tude of morally indifferent sex that is promoted in the schools is reinforced at home by the parents. Posner would like to see American parents become similarly enlightened. This is a twofold departure from libertarianism: not only is Posner suggesting that we use the state to promulgate a specific set of moral values—in this case, those that "deproblematize" sex—but he is indifferent to the right of parents to inculcate values in their children without having those values undermined by the state. Posner's support of parental liberty seems to hinge on the values being transmitted: elsewhere in *Sex and Reason* he expresses sympathy for parents whose "autonomy"

was threatened when the state prevented them from obtaining birth control for their children.

Children don't loom large in Posner's worldview. He rarely factors in emotional and psychological considerations when discussing policy issues, and never evaluates the effects of behavior or policies on the formation (or deformation) of character. For example, when he discusses the evolution from traditional marriage to contractual relationships that, by his own account, would be marked by a higher level of transience and dissolution, Posner acknowledges only that children might experience a "diminution in resources"—a diminution that could be compensated for, if a society chooses to do so, by government expenditure. No study, he says, has ever proved that the absence of a father, *per se*, harms a child.

Posner's treatment of free-market adoption is hardly more nuanced. Anticipating the obvious question of how a child's interests would be protected in a market of baby-selling, Posner simply cites the inefficiencies and occasional errors of our current highly regulated adoption system. Besides, he says, we could always take the extra precaution of restricting free-market adoptions to babies under six months old, since "very few" child molesters are interested in infants and "very few" would buy a baby for future abuse. As for premarital sex, Posner deems it "a generally harmless source of pleasure and for some people an important stage of marital search." The only possible downside is pregnancy—a practical glitch that can be controlled by contraception.

Bertrand Russell can hardly be accused of having been a paragon of bourgeois behavior: his personal life was a tangle of failed marriages, affairs, and infidelities. But his *Marriage and Morals*, from which Posner takes such inspiration, shows far greater sensitivity than *Sex and Reason* to the social ramifications of sexual policies. Russell was especially fearful for the well-being of children, and stressed that only adults without children should enjoy sexual liberty, experimentation, and trial marriage. The famous sexual revolutionary urged unhappy couples to stay together for the sake of the children and admitted that "the break-up of the family, if it comes

about, will not be, to my mind, a matter for rejoicing." He claimed that only the institution of the family "preserves the habit of having children," and he speculated that, as women became increasingly liberated financially and sexually (something he wholeheartedly endorsed), fatherhood would become increasingly superfluous. Russell felt that the consequences of this development would be nothing less than revolutionary:

If this comes about, it will make a profound change in the psychology and activities of men, far more profound, I believe, than most people would assume. Whether the effect upon men would be good or bad, I do not venture to say. It would eliminate from their lives the only emotion equal in importance to sex love. It would make sex love itself more trivial. It would make it far more difficult to take an interest in anything after one's own death. . . . It would diminish their interest in history and their sense of the continuity of historical tradition. . . . To strike a balance between good and bad effects is scarcely possible, but it is evident that the effects would be profound and far-reaching.

Posner credits *Marriage and Morals* with advancing a notion of morally indifferent sex, but Russell stressed that even the most liberated view of sex must be rooted in morality. A modern "sex morality" should be free from superstition, said Russell, but it should still be grounded in two timeless principles:

There should be as much as possible of that deep, serious love between man and woman which embraces the whole personality of both and leads to a fusion by which each is enriched and enhanced. The second thing of importance is that there should be adequate care of children, physical and psychological.

In contrast, *Sex and Reason* has this to say about love: "Love can be given a precise economic meaning . . . it is a preoccupation with the unique particulars of another person, particulars for which there is, by definition, no substitute to be found in any other person." The burden is on Posner to show how love can flourish in a culture of "morally indifferent" sex, and how children can thrive in a society that devalues the family. □

RISING SUN

Michael Crichton

Alfred A. Knopf/335 pages/\$22

reviewed by JOHN PODHORETZ

"You're not suggesting, Sir Denis, that we are up against Dr. Fu Manchu?" . . .

"I believe there is no secret society of this character, however small or remote, which is not affiliated to the organization known as the Si-Fan. That natives of the Pacific Islands are indirectly controlled by this group, I know for a fact; why not Negroes of West Africa?"

—The Mask of Fu Manchu, 1907

Why not Americans in Los Angeles, 1992? Not since the early decades of this century, when Sax Rohmer wrote his series of potboilers about "the stupendous genius" Fu Manchu and his Si-Fan—"the most ghastly menace to our civilization which has appeared since Attila the Hun!"—has there been so outrageous a work of popular fiction as Michael Crichton's best-selling *Rising Sun*. It not only "delivers the unique Crichton mix—breathtaking suspense and cutting edge technology—at its most explosive," as the dust jacket promises, but also includes a three-page bibliography of various treatises on the supposed Japanese takeover of the United States.

But though Crichton directs his readers to the turgid whinings of Clyde Prestowitz and his ilk, his work is far closer to Rohmer's in spirit and tone. The Fu Manchu books popularized the idea of a pan-Asian "Yellow Peril." So does Crichton's, only his novel condemns an entire nation, not a fanciful genius with hypnotic powers and a very, very long moustache.

Rising Sun is ostensibly a police procedural about the murder of a Los Angeles party girl which has been captured on videotape that turns out to have been

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electronically doctored. The murder, in fact, is tied up in the politically controversial sale of a high-tech American company to a Japanese firm. So eager are the Japanese for the sale to go through that they obstruct the police investigation. They try to buy a house for one of the detectives and when he refuses, they have him investigated for child abuse. They even send assassins to dispatch a policeman in his home where his infant daughter must cower in terror on the floor.

You'll notice I keep using the word "they" to describe the Japanese. That's because it's Crichton's favorite word in this novel. Every character within whose eyes are slanted is interchangeable. Every one of them has the same secret motives and the same pernicious ends in mind—save a turncoat female who helps the police because she grew up handicapped and was therefore ostracized by her fellow Japanese. "I do not mind if they suffer a little now," she says, and adds, "Oh, I hate them!"

Rising Sun is not without virtues, as befits the author of such great airplane reading as *The Andromeda Strain* and *Jurassic Park*. Crichton has come up with a stunning plot—albeit one so technical and special-effects-laden that it will be far easier to understand when it hits your local movie screen next year. But for the most part, his book reads less like a novel and more like the transcription of a radio call-in show in Detroit right after one of the Big Three announces a bunch of layoffs.

A bitter cop: "This country's in a war and some people understand it, and other people are siding with the enemy."

Another cop: "What do you want to do, write your congressman? They're all working for the Japanese anyway." →

A wise cop: "The Japanese are the most racist people on earth."

A senator: "I have colleagues who say sooner or later we're going to have to drop another bomb. . . . I don't feel that way. Usually."

A call girl: "But then, what they want to do—at least, some of them. . . . And to them, their wishes, their desires, it's just as natural as leaving the tip. . . . They have this—this way. . . . They're strange people."

A reporter at the *Los Angeles Times*: "The Japanese have a powerful influence at the paper. It's more than their relentless PR machine drumming out of Washington, or the local lobbying and the campaign contributions to political figures and organizations. It's the sum of those things and more. And it's starting to be insidious. I mean, you can be sitting around in a staff meeting discussing some article that we might run, and you suddenly realize, nobody wants to *offend* them. It isn't a question of whether a story is right or wrong, news or not news. . . . Sometimes I look at my editors, and I can tell they won't go with certain stories because they're afraid. They don't even know what they're afraid of. They're just afraid."

This is only a taste of the—literally—hundreds upon hundreds of rank generalizations made on page after page of this tract. Crichton attempts to cover himself against the obvious charges of racism and xenophobia by coming across like a cultural relativist gone especially berserk. His mouthpiece, a brilliant LAPD detective with long experience of Japan and the Japanese named John Connor, is forever explaining to his hopelessly dim sidekick, Peter Smith, why we have to understand the Japanese for what they really are.

"It's just that Americans believe there is some core of individuality that doesn't change from one moment to the next. And the Japanese believe context rules everything," Connor says, later adding helpfully, "Behavior that seems sneaky and cowardly to Americans is just standard operating procedure to Japanese."

He can dress it up any way he wants, but the end message of this book is exactly the same as Sax Rohmer's: There's a malevolent force coming out of the East that is stronger, smarter, wiser, and meaner than any other on earth, and its aim is world domination.

Scratch a Japan-basher like Crichton, and right underneath what you really find is an America-basher. The book is full of denunciations of American companies, American parents, American finance, and just about everything else American. Every American politician is in the pocket of Japanese interests, as is every American academic. "America has become a land without substance," John Connor says. "We don't make things anymore."

Unfortunately, we do make some things—noxious things like this book, which makes disturbing use of exactly the same sorts of clichés about the Japanese that informed Nazi notions about world Jewry. Near the end of the novel, the idiotic Peter Smith asks the wise John Connor why the Japanese are moving so fast to take over America. Connor answers: "They know that sooner or later there will be a backlash."

Sooner or later? ☐

THE LETTERS OF EVELYN WAUGH AND DIANA COOPER

Edited by Artemis Cooper

Ticknor & Fields/344 pages/\$27.50

reviewed by RICHARD LAMB

There are no affairs with starlets, no carcasses of carnivores in the African bush. He did walk away from a plane crash, but did not chase imaginary Nazi subs in a fishing boat. The last thing he felt was the sudden pain of a heart attack, not the cool of oiled steel against epiglottis. But he was a conscientious artist at pains to hide it, wore a carapace of bluster, and married a girl with a boy's haircut. In death, he became an industry. There is no escaping it: Evelyn Waugh has become the Anglo-Hemingway.

There is nothing new about this. Waugh once observed, "I am coupled always (greatly to my honor) with Hemingway as a 'beat up old bastard.'"

Why this popularity amounting to obsession? There are a multitude of reasons—one is the dread PBS factor. Another is the era both wrote best about, for the twenties, like the sixties, loom as a time when romantic cravings were satisfied just by living. One need only look at Cyril Connolly—who spent the decade longing for the eighteenth century or Augustan Rome—to see that this is an illu-

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sion. But the Paris of *bals musettes* and give-a-chap-a-drink, the London of the Café Royal and Bright Young Things "baying for broken glass," have lapsed in the popular imagination and among what Gore Vidal aptly calls the "literature bureaucracy."

For both men, this time was embodied by women, in both cases aristocratic Englishwomen, who have the world's most undeserved reputation for dowdiness and bad teeth. Hemingway's was Lady Duff Twysden, an irresistible combination of misery, drunkenness, and a body like a racing yacht's. Waugh had several. Among them were Baby Jungman, the "rather chocolate-box blonde" duchess of high bohemia, who dusted his fervent suit; Diana Guinness (*née* Mitford), who later married the Punchinello-faced English fascist Sir Oswald Mosley; and Elizabeth Ponsonby, the model for Agatha Runcible in *Vile Bodies*.

But Waugh's most lasting infatuation was Lady Diana Cooper. She was 40 when Waugh first met her, eleven years his senior, a bit long in the tooth to be a Bright Young Thing. But few illuminated the English social landscape with greater radiance, and to

describe her is perforce to gush. A renowned beauty, she was the daughter of the Duke of Rutland. The young Winston Churchill admired her. Lord Wimborne, the Viceroy of Ireland, was a frequent and unwelcome visitor to her boudoir. The King of Spain tried to put his hand up her dress at a ball. Such was the clamorousness and tenacity of her admirers that her mother gave her a service revolver before a weekend at Blenheim Palace, which had a reputation for debauch. She was forced to brandish it before the Viceroy. "I never saw," her future husband would say, "so many swine cast before one pearl."

Besieged by rakes, she was courted by several clean-run poetical youths, sons of Souls, the flower of England's administrative class. But her mother wanted her to be Princess of Wales and considered one of them "drunk and dangerous," another "a gasp of horror." They were killed one by one in the Great War. "Misfortune has empire over me . . ." wrote Lady Diana.

In 1919 she decided to marry Duff Cooper, poor, promiscuous, a passionate gambler, and the son of Alfred Cooper, a surgeon specializing in venereal complaints. Duff Cooper's mother was the sister of a duke, but had become a pariah after two elopements and a divorce. Her husband joked that between them they had examined the private parts of half the peerage. Diana's mother was outraged by the engagement, and required the *Times* to deny it, but finally agreed to the marriage. Diana became an actress to finance Duff's political career—as an MP and, later, first lord of the Admiralty, secretary of state for war, minister of information, and ambassador to Paris. He was also briefly chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the dustbin of British power politics, a job Churchill refused in disgust after losing the Admiralty.

Waugh met Diana Cooper in 1932 when she was acting in *The Miracle*, a latter-day morality play done in mime. He thought the play heretical, but was at-

tracted by the whiff of Edwardian glamour that never left her. She liked his manic and anarchic sense of humor. They were lifelong friends and sedulous correspondents, but the bulk of their letters had been thought lost, and few appear in Mark Amory's excellent *Letters of Evelyn Waugh*. Now that lacuna has been filled by Artemis Cooper, granddaughter of Diana and editor, previously, of *The Diana Cooper Scrapbook* and *A Durable Fire: The Letters of Duff and Diana Cooper, 1913-1950*.

These letters reveal a complex web of love, admiration, frustration, and devotion. Waugh and Diana Cooper were friends for thirty years. He adored her, she doted on him. She was "Pug," or "Baby"; he was "Wu." They reveled in moments together—he read his books aloud to her—and went to great trouble to see each other. After thirty years,



their letters were still filled with the blandishments and pique of youthful infatuation. As old age laid their generation waste, she was still the maiden loth and he the melodist, though not a happy one.

This sexual reluctance on Diana Cooper's part was a source of great vexation; for thirty years Waugh was doomed to be correspondent, not co-respondent. She would not take him into her bed, though she was reputed to have

had many lovers. And always lurking is the reality that he was a Hampstead boy on the make, soaring on wings of wit and celebrity. Duff Cooper, whom Waugh admired as a man of affairs and former rakehell, viewed him with resentment and disdain, once calling him "a common little man . . . who happens to have written one or two amusing novels." It might be observed that Duff himself had been considered "a contemptible parvenu" at the time of his marriage, and that he is a justly unremembered author. (His novel *Operation Heartbreak* was referred to as "Operation Sickmake.") But social-climbing was precisely the charge that Waugh was most open to, and which would have been most wounding—unless exceeded by Diana's taking him to task for speaking knowingly of her supposed liaisons: "Just because I never responded to his dribbling dwarfish little amorous *singeries*, he need not be so sure." How feeling-hurting.

The Waugh of this book is well known from novels, diaries, and other letters. He is irritable, fastidious, and perverse. His life has episodes of accidie and broad comedy. In *Tangier*, writing *A Handful of Dust*, he has a concubine with a tattooed face. ("I have formed an attachment for a young lady named Fatima . . .") Invited to visit by the wife of a diplomat, whose name he has forgotten, he arrives in Baghdad; asks around, "Who is a pretty, fair-haired woman married to a diplomat?"; and telegraphs to notify total strangers of his arrival.

("After the first very grave shock it was O.K. and they laughed a lot and I had quite a funny week-end.") In the 1950s, while writing his biography of Ronald Knox, he dines with a boyhood friend of the priest, who regales him with stories, but Waugh gets so plastered that in the morning he has no memory beyond meeting the man. ("The last thing I remember saying was 'How about some vodka with our caviar?'")

There are middling *mots*: "I think it

ought always to be disappointing to meet an artist"; "The only human relationships I can abide are intimacy, formality, and servility"; "The craving for leanness is one of the nastiest of America's contributions to modern folly." And there is some pleasing spleen. On the Abyssinian war: "I hope the organmen gas them to buggery." Later: "I go to Spain for the first 3 weeks of October to avoid democracy."

The surprise—and it is a pleasant one—is Lady Diana. She is recognizable as the inspiration for the batty, blithe, intriguing Mrs. Stitch in *Scoop* and the *Sword of Honour* books. She lies in bed surrounded by correspondence and admirers. She thinks looking in the rear-view mirror is "common." She butters up Macmillan to get her diplomat son posted to Paris. (The prime minister resigned and her son was sent to Beirut.) But Waugh's fictionalized portrait is a caricature, for she was also a passionate and neurotic woman, prone to angst and Churchillian "mealancholly."

This isn't a book with universal appeal, but the Waugh industry is proving a surprisingly durable one. Waugh fans, Cooper fans, devotees of choleric humor, and anyone with an interest in English society of the thirties, forties, and fifties will be delighted. The footnotes are copious and fascinating, and drag out of the woodwork such characters as Brenda Dean Paul (1907-49), "daughter of Sir Aubrey Dean Paul of Rodburgh, 5th Bt. She was a cocaine addict, and a flamboyant member of the Gargoyle Club." Or the Hon. Elisabeth Sempill (b. 1912), "daughter of the 18th Baron Sempill, changed sex and became the Hon. Ewan Forbes-Sempill in 1950 or 1951. In 1952, he married Isabella Mitchell; and he succeeded his brother as the 11th Bt. Forbes of Craigievar in 1965. The crest of his coat of arms (matriculated in 1963) is a cock proper."

Diana Cooper's letters are wonderful. She couldn't spell (neither could Waugh), but she had a rare, sharp turn of phrase that Raymond Asquith described as an "electric illiteracy." Her granddaughter has corrected all but the most egregious misspellings of both parties, and at their best these letters exhibit that blend of the catty and the lyrical that signals high epistolary art. □

TCHAIKOVSKY: THE QUEST FOR THE INNER MAN

Alexander Poznansky

Schirmer Books/679 pages/\$39.95

reviewed by ALGIS VALIUNAS

In the ecstatic confrontation with a great work of art, one sometimes wishes that he could know what it is to create something of this staggering beauty—perhaps even wishes that he could have been the blessed genius who made the work. Of course, the more one knows of the lives of artists, the less one entertains such wishes. The modern industry in artistic biography finds its raw materials in the hideous aspects of character, the parts of a life that one wishes could remain hidden. There are, in the main, two different responses to the sight of an ugly life that produces marvelous art. For some, great works remain what they are despite these personal revelations; the merely personal does not count for much in the face of such glory. For others, the worst aspects of the life take the shine off its most splendid productions. One measures the distance between failure at life and success at art, and even the artist's accomplishments fall into the abyss of his drunkenness, womanizing (or *manizing*), cowardice, cruelty, or turpitude.

"This is not a study of Tchaikovsky's music. This is a study of the man who wrote the music." So begins Alexander Poznansky's life of Tchaikovsky, and while Poznansky cannot help but refer to the music at times, one nevertheless misses what could have been applied in a book some fifty pages longer: a connection between the life and art. (One wishes for a detailed description of, say, the Fourth Symphony, with its slight heroic woodwinds submitting to and emerging from the massed forces of strings and brass: the possibility of individual happi-

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ness—eroded in the second movement until it seems merely endurance but finding strength enough in the third and fourth movements for renewed joy—being continually reasserted and continually crushed.)

All the same, Poznansky has taken on a significant project and done well by it. The previous biographical record includes the usual helping of Soviet untruth: "Hardly any other figure in the history of Russian culture," says Poznansky, "has been subjected by government-controlled scholarship to such a degree of biographical falsification. . . . Soviet popular and scholarly books represent Tchaikovsky as nothing less than a model member of the 'progressive artistic intelligentsia'—a trivial concept that strips him of his true identity." Tchaikovsky himself might have preferred Soviet obfuscation to the searchlight that Poznansky shines onto "everything that all my life I have so carefully hidden from the touch of the crowd."

Tchaikovsky bore the customary markings of the prodigy, with none of the glitter. After he had gone to bed early one evening, his governess looked in on him, and found him in tears: "Oh, this music, this music," he lamented. "Save me from it. It's here [pointing to his head], it never leaves me in peace." The governess remembered the young Tchaikovsky coming to her after a long session at the piano "in a state of nervous distress." Once, bemused by a particular rhythm, he tapped it out with his fingers on a windowpane, until the glass broke and sliced his hand. At the age of nine he wrote, "I . . . never leave the piano, which makes me happy when I feel sad."

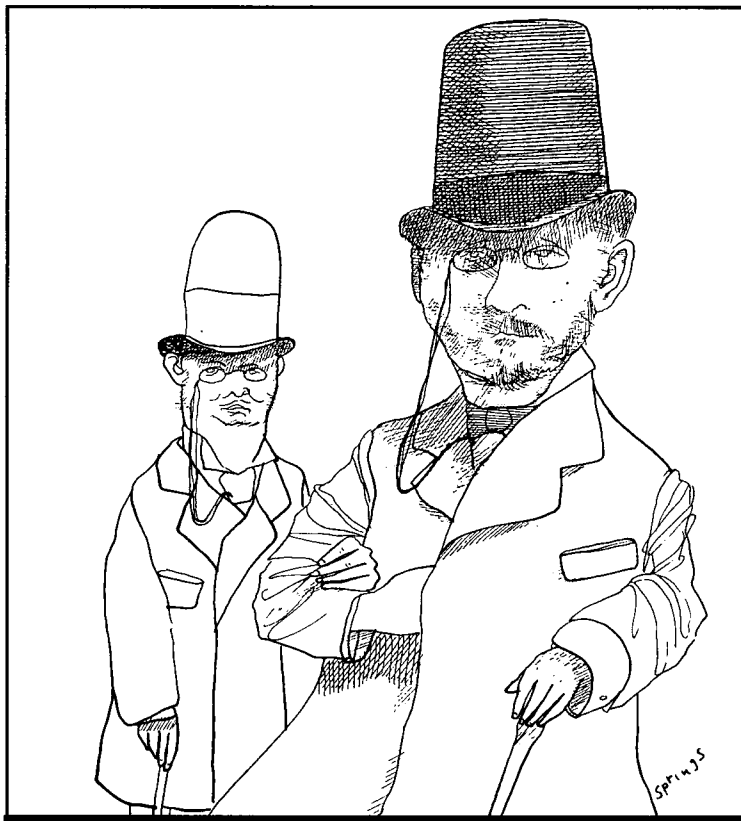
There was no place for music in his

parents' plans for him. Members of the lower echelons of the hereditary gentry, they considered a musician's profession one of slim prestige; nor were there conservatories for young boys preparing for a musical career. Tchaikovsky enrolled in the School for Jurisprudence, a "step that would ultimately cost him thirteen years of doubt and hesitation as to his true vocation." Tchaikovsky continued his musical pursuits mostly on the outside. He was a regular at the Italian Opera, where various troupes performed, generally to a higher standard than any Russian production. He sang in the school choir, as a treble. Sundays for three years he took music lessons from the pianist Rudolph Kudinger, who eventually found him to be of small talent and broke off the instruction.

While Tchaikovsky prepared to take his place in the bureaucracy, Russia was developing a taste for music. The Russian Musical Society, founded in 1857, catered to a popular demand for classical music, which had always been an aristocratic prerogative; the public was introduced to Beethoven, Handel, Bach, Gluck, Schumann, Schubert, Glinka, Dargomyzhsky, and Anton Rubinstein. Moreover, the Society offered music classes, with open admission, in St. Petersburg and Moscow. While working in the Department of Justice, Tchaikovsky took some classes in St. Petersburg, and, after quitting his post, was one of the first to enroll in the St. Petersburg Conservatory, which opened in 1862. From that time he became a musical zealot, studying orchestration and composition with Rubinstein, doing some teaching of his own, and working as an accompanist. In 1866 he began to teach at the Moscow Conservatory, under the oversight of Nikolay Rubinstein, who cracked piano keys like walnuts and handled the young women given to swooning in his classes by ordering them to be hauled off or doused with cold water.

As Tchaikovsky's musical vocation

was being clarified and defined, so was his sexual nature. He shared in the homosexual activities at the School for Jurisprudence, and, upon leaving school, became a member of an elegant homosexual circle centered on the poet Aleksey Apukhtin. Apukhtin was hailed as the second Pushkin, yet never quite got around to writing the poems that would have justified the comparison; obese, short of breath, in an endless erotic uproar, and suffering from the inanition of "Oblomovism," he failed at his vocation, but his charm and wit earned him considerable renown. Through Apukhtin, Tchaikovsky was introduced to numerous other homosexuals with whom he could have flings that tended to be "fairly decorous, brief, and superficial." Considered "girlishly pretty," Tchaikovsky



went in for impersonating female dancers, and developed quite a taste for ceremonial transvestism, dressing for one ball as a domino of black lace with diamonds and an ostrich-feather fan. Poznansky even surmises that he may have engaged in sexual play with his twin brothers, ten years younger than he. In later life, Tchaikovsky showed no sign of "moral remorse" for his life of homosexuality.

He did, however, weary of his companions, and railed against "the emptiness and insignificance of these people." He began to think that he had the makings of a roaring heterosexual; he figured he could make the conversion without too much ado. He received his initiation into heterosexuality by resisting the advances of his brother-in-law's younger sister, Vera Davydova. That done with, he next had an affair, though an unconsummated one, with the French soprano Desirée Artôt, which went so far as engagement, also unconsummated. Artôt was five years older than Tchaikovsky, and that rattled her mother; Artôt's accomplishments outshone Tchaikovsky's own, and that perturbed his friends. Tchaikovsky spoke of the coruscating ardors of love meant to last, but he also subjected his love to "cool reason," which showed it to less advantage. It was chiefly his pride that was hurt when she married a Spanish baritone she had met in Warsaw.

To his brother Modest, Tchaikovsky wrote in 1876: "I am now experiencing a very critical moment in my life. . . . For the time being, I shall say one thing: *I have decided to marry.*" He made his way through more unsuitable candidates; meanwhile, he tallied up three homosexual scores in one lively month. His notions of matrimony bent under the pressure of his sexual inclinations: "I shall not enter into any lawful or illicit union with a woman without having fully insured my own peace and my own freedom." Poznansky shows how deep the division runs in Tchaikovsky's heart: he despises married

homosexuals who persist in their homosexuality, and in another letter he states his intention not to follow in their path should he get married himself. This dilemma "reflects the divided feelings of a society that tacitly accepted homosexuality as long as it was not spoken about, yet condemned it when publicly exposed." Tchaikovsky understood his homosexual passions to be innocent ones,

his birthright. Nevertheless, his speaking of his “vice”—the customary usage of the time—showed the extent to which the values of society had made their impression on him.

Tchaikovsky did marry, in 1877, Antonina Milyukova, a very pretty woman with not much else to recommend her—an “absolute vacuum” in head and heart, a Moscow Conservatory student who might have benefited from a dose of Nikolay Rubinstein’s cold water. At an uncertain point in their romance, she wrote to Tchaikovsky how close she was to killing herself for want of him. Tchaikovsky in reply undertook the composition of his opera *Eugene Onegin*, in which a young gentleman with a streak of nihilistic indifference turns down a young woman’s advances and lives to regret it. Tchaikovsky identified himself strongly with the young woman, Tatyana, and, “yielding to an irresistible emotional need,” before he had a libretto or a scheme for the work, wrote the music for the letter Tatyana sends to Onegin. Art became conflated with life: Tchaikovsky feared to make Onegin’s mistake and, instead, made a mistake all his own. Anticipating disapproval, he kept the marriage secret even from his family until the eve of the grand occasion. Kissing the bride, he almost broke into tears. He bragged and capered for a while, but he felt desperation closing in fast.

Shortly after, he wrote to his brother Anatoly, “In the physical respect, my wife has become *absolutely repulsive* to me.” To his more delicate correspondents, Antonina became “that certain woman”; to his more robust confidants, she was “the reptile” and “this spawn of hell.” “I wish her every happiness,” he wrote, “which does not prevent me from hating her deeply.” When he fled to Switzerland that autumn, her letters followed him, and left him physically ill, incapable of composing:

I am an artist who can and must bring honor to his homeland. I feel in myself great artistic power. I have not yet done even a tenth of what I can do. And I want with all my heart to do it all. Meanwhile I am now unable to work. . . . I am ill and, I swear to you, close to insanity.

He sought divorce, which was not easily arranged. Negotiations continued for

some years, but the separation remained an informal one. “Only now, especially after the incident of my marriage, have I finally begun to understand that there is nothing more fruitless than wanting to be other than what I am by nature.”

At about the time he married Antonina, Tchaikovsky began an impassioned, if peculiar, relationship with Mrs. Nadezhda von Meck, nine years his senior, the multi-millionaire widow of a railroad tycoon, mother of eleven, and patroness of the arts. Commissioning a few works from Tchaikov-



sky, Mrs. von Meck paid him more than handsomely for his compositions. He answered that his financial dealings with her made him uneasy, and even turned down another commission, afraid of writing something slight and pocketing the usual hefty sum in reward. However, these reservations faded, and he told her out and out that he needed three thousand rubles and she was the only person he would ask for money. A few months later, she wrote:

I regard the musician-human as the supreme creation of nature. In you the musician and the human being are united so beautifully, so harmoniously, that one can give oneself up entirely to the charm of the sounds of your music, because in these sounds there is noble, unfeigned meaning; they are written not for other people but for the expression of your own feelings, thoughts, and mood.

Such words struck the sentimental Tchaikovsky to the soul, yet he warned

her that he was not the man she thought he was.

The correspondence, and Mrs. von Meck’s financial generosity, lasted more than thirteen years. The two made a tacit agreement never to meet. She would rather think of him “in the distance. . . to feel as one with [him] in [his music].” When he dedicated his Fourth Symphony (1878) to her, program music of which the main theme is Fate and its implacability, she replied with the criticism, “Blame yourself, and do not say that everything in the world is sad. Joys there are, simple, but powerful. Delight in the merriment of others. Life is still possible.” If sometimes she was intellectual and confidante, at others she was pure *inamorata*. From her profusion of admiration, Tchaikovsky sometimes turned and hid. Occasionally he’d remind her that he was constructed on a strictly—that is, disappointingly—human scale. Occasionally they would speculate on politics, and what men are truly capable of. To her he wrote, “What you have said about communism is entirely true. It is impossible to imagine a more senseless utopia, something more discordant with the native qualities of human nature.”

Repeatedly he voiced his willingness to give up her subsidy and return to teaching. She rebuffed him every time: “I shall not give up my right to take care of you, nor have you the right to take it from me, until such a time as I am no longer able to enjoy it, and that boundary God will show to us both.” The time came, after he had turned 50, when she could no longer afford Tchaikovsky’s allowance. A letter from Tchaikovsky absolved her of any fault in the matter, reiterated his gratitude for the years of assistance, and pitied her for the loss of her fortune. Yet it was the last letter he wrote to her; and he was never to hear from her again.

Tchaikovsky died in 1893 at 53, a victim of the cholera epidemic in St. Petersburg. The funeral service in Kazan Cathedral required a ticket of admission, but the cathedral could hold only 6,000 of the 60,000 who applied. “I feel very sorry about Tchaikovsky,” Tolstoy wrote, “sorry because it seemed to me we had something in common. . . . Sorry about him as a man with whom something was not quite clear, even more than as a musician.” Mrs. von Meck died three months later. □

INVENTING THE MIDDLE AGES: THE LIVES, WORKS, AND IDEAS OF THE GREAT MEDIEVALISTS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Norman F. Cantor

William Morrow & Co./477 pages/\$28

reviewed by FRANCIS X. ROCCA

The curious layman will not be blamed for thinking that maybe he ought to read up on the Middle Ages themselves before delving into this study of twentieth-century medievalists. In fact, this book serves well as an introduction to the period, with a summary of European history from the fourth century through the fourteenth, and passages on poetry, art and architecture, philosophy and theology, agriculture, and the common law. Instead of cramming his short surveys with dates, Norman Cantor uses learned generalizations and vivid word-pictures. He approves of "popularizers" like Barbara Tuchman and Umberto Eco and considers the ability to tell an absorbing story indispensable to the historian:

The aristocratic Frankish women—with whom the lords and knights diurnally copulated in the high-ceilinged wooden feasting halls among the packs of dogs and heaped garbage bones of countless red-meat roasted dinners—if only to save themselves from constant pregnancies and early deaths in the roulette experiences of perilous childbirth, had begun to urge their masters and sons to fabled and valiant deeds of heroic romance in distant exotic climes.

Certainly this is a more titillating account of the First Crusade than most of us received in ninth grade. Here and there the reader also learns specific, highly repeatable facts, such as the name of the one and only English pope (Adrian IV, *né* Nicholas Breakspear); the location of the WC in the Bodleian Library ("hidden behind a door marked 'School of Oriental

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Languages"); and the artist Frank Stella's undergraduate major at Princeton (history). There is some intriguing conjecture, too; for instance, that the Mafia was founded by partisans of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II.

While the authors Cantor treats are, with a couple of exceptions, neither popularizers nor household names, their work has determined the image of the Middle Ages that is propagated in bookstores and lecture halls. This image is entirely a twentieth-century creation. True, the Romantics and the Victorians were fond of the Middle Ages, but their visions were distorted by "ideological projections": idealism in the former case; "nationalism, deterministic organicism, and racist social Darwinism" in the latter. Moreover, it was not until the turn of this century that the necessary archival resources had been accumulated and organized. Which is not to say that the Victorians' successors approached their subject with scientific objectivity; they "fashioned their interpretations of the Middle Ages out of the emotional wellsprings of their lives," which were inevitably affected by the century's social and political upheavals, particularly the world wars.

In Hitler's Germany, Ernst Robert Curtius conducted a "subtle resistance to Nazism from within," maintaining his chair at the University of Bonn by switching his field from modern French to medieval Latin. In his study of that less "provocative" subject, he developed an anti-ideological theory of literature, resistant to the cultural doctrines of National Socialism and to totalitarianism in general. "Only in the creative word," Curtius wrote, is the mind "in

its perfect freedom: above concept, above doctrine, above precept."

At the same time, Oxford's Frederick Maurice Powicke conjured a "Proustian dream vision . . . of the high aristocracy" in his study of Henry III (1946). Short, ugly, and plebeian, Powicke "looked like one of Tolkien's hobbits," and "just wanted to join a good London club." Yet the author was responding not only to personal circumstances but also to world events. In a totalitarian age, an explanation of politics that stressed dynasty rather than party, and bonds of loyalty rather than ideology, displayed "a saving rationality."

World War II was a crucial influence on J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis as well. In "the bitter, depleted world" of "post-hegemonic" Britain, they looked to the distant past for inspiration—in both their fiction and their literary scholarship. "Out of the medieval Norse, Celtic, and Grail legends, they conjured fantasies of revenge and recovery, an ethos of return and triumph." Despite their many similarities, including Christian and cultural conservatism, Lewis and Tolkien found vastly different popular audiences: middle-class, religious traditionalists in the one case, and the youth of the sixties counterculture in the other. Cantor finds Lewis's appeal in his message of "the goodness and beauty of common acts in everyday life," a medieval idea that suited a humbled postwar Britain as it does Middle America today. As for the flower children, they embraced Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* because it identified evil with "mechanistic domination . . . the world of machines that strangle life and goodness." Cantor thinks that this epic—"one of the enduring classics of English literature" and "the most extended and difficult piece of pseudomedievalism ever imagined"—will ensure that Tolkien's fame outlasts Lewis's.

Cantor knows that academic reputation is shaped by factors other than sheer merit; the "canonization" of Marc Bloch, founder of the Annalist school of social historians, is a case study. Cantor does not dispute Bloch's heroism as a leader of the French resistance, which led to his "martyrdom" at the hands of the Gestapo, but argues that his successors cultivated Bloch as an "intellectual deity," reciting his name as a "symbolic talisman" in their takeover

of the French, and then the American, historical establishment.

Cantor devotes twenty-one pages to defending David Knowles, a Benedictine monk who left the abbey for a Cambridge professorship and the company of a female psychoanalyst. Frustrated in his attempts to raise the intellectual level of his religious community—and perhaps frustrated in his attempts to have sex with the novices—Knowles was a visionary marginalized by the intransigent, pre-Vatican II Church. Many Catholics will have their reservations about this portrayal, but it is refreshing to watch a non-Catholic defend a rebellious cleric on the grounds not of enlightened liberal social values but of medieval theology, with knowledgeable references to Ailred of Rievaulx and St. Bernard of Clairvaux.

One academic whose personal reputation will suffer from this book is a distinguished historian whom Cantor calls “my teacher and friend, a man I loved much more than my own father.” The professor killed himself more than thirty years ago, for reasons that have never been made public. “There was talk,” Cantor reports, “that there had been a woman, the wife of a German classicist at Johns Hopkins, whom he loved. One version was that she had broken off their affair; another that she died.” But looking through the volumes of the library that the deceased had bequeathed him, Cantor found letters that suggested the possibility that “his suicide was occasioned by the end of a homoerotic relationship” with another famous historian. With loving sons like this, one is tempted to ask, who needs patricides? There is no obvious reason for the inclusion of this information. Cantor, who analyzes his subjects to some extent along Freudian lines, might have done the same to himself in this case.

Cantor savages the character of another mentor he claims to venerate. Richard Southern wrote a revolutionary book in the fifties that emphasized the romantic and individualistic character of twelfth-century culture. To his zealous disciples, this book was “a revelation, the Gospel

According to Sir Richard, a liberation, an epiphany.” Yet the author declined his role as the evangelical leader of a new academic sect (which would have included Cantor). The Marxian Annalists thus went unchallenged in their takeover of medievalism, a catastrophe so great that Cantor deems Southern’s decision an act of criminal cowardice. “He made, in Dante’s term, the ‘great refusal.’” *Il gran rifiuto*, in the *Inferno*, is the offense for which Pope Celestine V, after abdicating in favor of the discreditable Boniface VIII, lands in Hell. Used in reference to academia, such rhetoric is more than a little overblown. One has to wonder if there was something else at stake, something more personal, to explain Cantor’s anger.

For it is anger that enlivens—and perhaps motivated—this book. Cantor rues “the decline of the social visibility of the historical profes-

New York University.” This is an estimable position, to be sure, but the action of *Inventing the Middle Ages* takes place on a plane of academic prestige one or two levels higher—at Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard, and Princeton—and Cantor, keenly aware of the “depressing conditions within the sociology of academia,” must resent, at the end of a distinguished career, that academia’s higher perches have eluded him.

Notwithstanding the bitter interdecennial struggles among the medievalists, Cantor has great hopes for the discipline—hopes that transcend scholarship. He predicts a wave of “retromedievalism” for the twenty-first century, when the defunct values of modernism, socialism, and capitalism will be replaced by the most essential elements of the medieval legacy: i.e., a “remote and disengaged state” and a “sentimental formalism” in culture and personal behavior. This vision is as vague as it is hopeful and conspicuously lacking a feature that defines the Middle Ages for many: namely religious faith.

To understand how Cantor can conceive of this we must go back to the front of the book, where he states that medieval civilization “stands toward our postmodern culture as the conjunctive other, the intriguing shadow, the marginally distinctive double, the secret sharer of our dreams and anxieties.” Emphasizing the similarities, he compares St. Augustine to Freud, and St. Thomas Aquinas to the architects of the New Deal—arguable illogical analogies both. Then he makes an equation that betrays his blindness on this point. The ethos of the Franciscans, he says, was the same as that of “New Left communes of the 1960s and the Woodstock generation.” The distinction between a life of consecrated poverty and a rock concert, between charity and hedonism, should be obvious, and it is hardly marginal. This is not a casual error; it bespeaks a certain limitation in Cantor’s own judgment that we must bear in mind as we read his often shrewd, and usually entertaining, assessment of his peers. □



sion,” deplores the Annalists, and blames yet another of his teachers, Joseph Strayer, for allowing the Annalists to take over Princeton’s history department. It was Strayer’s insufficient “resolve to oppose” Bloch’s successors in the 1960s that doomed the department to its position a decade later as “the American center of the Annalist school.”

According to the dust jacket, Cantor is today “a professor of history, sociology, comparative literature, and law at

VOX

Nicholson Baker

Random House/165 pages/\$15

reviewed by AMOS BLOOD

The French critic Roland Barthes said of professional wrestling forty years ago that what the public craved was the *image* of passion rather than passion itself. His words could be taken as a remarkably prescient characterization of post-modernism in the arts, which pleases by deliberately putting itself at an ironic distance from the old-fashioned, raw emotion that it pretends to represent. Now, what Jaystack Calhoun did for wrestling, Nicholson Baker is doing for pornography. His new novel, *Vox*, is not just a masturbatory fantasy, nor yet a comic novel about masturbation, like Philip Roth's *Portnoy's Complaint*, but a masturbatory fantasy about masturbation.

Baker, author of odd works of minimalist whimsy like *The Mezzanine* and *Under the Skin*, is clearly a coming man. *Vox* has received a gratifying amount of negative publicity, including national attention for its banning by a San Francisco radio station of an ad for it which, had it run, could have been heard by only a few thousand people. The book purports to be a telephone conversation between two strangers, a man and a woman, whose lines cross when they both ring up a phone-sex clearinghouse advertised in pornographic magazines: for him, *Juggs*; for her, *Penthouse Forum*. Having chosen each other from among the available callers, they are then placed in a telephonic "back room" to continue *tête à tête* a conversation that both expect to end arousing.

There is a certain lapse in verisimilitude in the fact that they are excited, since the odds against two people with

such bizarre sexual tastes finding each other on a chat line must be astronomical. It is not surprising that the end they have in view is masturbation, nor that ordinary girls or guys, as might you or I, can think of a lot of sexy things to say to a stranger whom we know lives thousands of miles away and whom we never have to meet—things that might be more erotic than what we would dare say to an old-fashioned "date." The telephone wire picks the lock on the box wherein we keep our fantasies; I quite understand that. It's just that—and here's where I get confused—sexual fantasy has always seemed to me to imply a manufactured mental image of real-time sex.

Not to Nicholson Baker. Although he says he does not mind if readers take up his book "in search of a sizzling read," he had better hope that those who do so have a very low sizzle-point. For not only do the two characters have nothing to offer to our imaginations but their own fantasies, so we are already at two removes from reality, but the fantasies themselves for the most part eschew real sex and concentrate on masturbation, for which Baker invents kinder, gentler new slang terms ("dithering" or "strumming") to replace the rather violent and brutal ones in common currency. The male protagonist is excited not by an accessible woman or even the image of such a woman but by the image of a woman self-contained, a woman alone, a woman masturbating:

I almost think that each one of the times a woman comes in private in her life has to continue to exist as a kind of sphere, a foot-and-a-half-wide sphere, in some

ideal dimension, sort of like all the ovums you've got queued up in you except these are . . . ovums of past orgasms, weird as that sounds, and I am this one viable spermatozoid lurking around among them, and I would happily spend my life floating up to one after another of these unique orgasm-spheres and looking inside and I'd be able to watch you make yourself come that one time.

This is what we might call politically correct voyeurism: the man never touches the woman, even in imagination, and his greatest pleasure is in hearing what is in her mind as she dithers and strums, what it is, in other words, that guarantees her sexual independence from him. There is a nice irony, then, in the fact that the woman on the other end of the line obliges him by indulging in fantasies that complement his. She imagines, to please him, not his masturbating but her own, and with truly feminine coyness engages in an elaborate tease, lasting more than a third of the book, involving an unfulfilled promise to tell him what she thought about the last time she masturbated.

Those who think that Philip Larkin had the last word on the advantages of masturbation over the real thing—costs nothing, over in five minutes, the rest of the evening your own—should take a look at the state of the art in this book. Not only does the conversation itself take "hours and hours and hours" at a cost of \$1.90 a minute, but the elaborate fantasies it describes seem to occupy most of the male protagonist's waking hours. The real centerpiece of the novel is an extended account of how he inveigled a female colleague at work into masturbating in his presence but under a blanket, while they watched a pornographic video together. This, he tells the woman on the phone, was "probably the best sexual experience I've had." What a man!

His interlocutor answers with a story of her own involving a circus and a date with a not-very-interesting man that ends with her pouring olive oil down his trousers and the two of them then proceeding to masturbate in the shower and each other's presence. In both these stories there is a comic side. The circus man, for example, turns out to be a "demon scrub wizard" who insists on clean-

(continued on page 81)

Amos Blood's review of Preston Sturges by Preston Sturges appeared in the January 1991 TAS.

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CORRESPONDENCE

(continued from page 12)

uate of the ORU Law School. His remark was inconsiderate and was obviously not based upon any fact knowledge of his. This is unfortunate in light of the scholarly job he otherwise did in his article.

—Roger L. Tuttle
Richmond, Virginia

David Brock replies:

I don't normally call people who write in to compliment my work obnoxious, so perhaps Mr. Doggett and I can reach some accommodation. As for Mary Dunlap, I can only recommend that she chill out.

Mr. Thatcher raises a common question about Hill's lie-detector test. The test result can often turn on whether or not the polygraph examiner is hostile or friendly. In the Hill case, the examiner was chosen by one of her attorneys, not an objective third party (like the FBI or the Judiciary Committee). The subject and the examiner have a long conversation before the exam is administered. If that conversation is designed to put the subject at ease, the result can be thrown. Since the test is measuring anxiety levels, it is hardly surprising that Hill passed.

I don't quite follow Mr. Thatcher's argument about Thomas's qualifications. Is the point that, because Thomas was "not in the same league intellectually" as Bork, the Anita Hill character smear was an acceptable means of keeping him off the court?

Perhaps Mr. Zimmerman should leave journalism and join Senator Metzenbaum's staff. I understand the position held by James Brudney will be open soon.

Finally, I would like to apologize to Mr. Tuttle and all those ORU graduates who wrote to take issue with my hyperbolic characterization of the school as "fourth-rate." Interestingly, none of them took issue with my characterization of Hill.

For the Record

Due to production schedules, Ernest van den Haag's "Thoughts on Rape" (TAS, May 1992) was run without the author's final approval. Our apologies to Mr. van den Haag.

—The Editors

VOX

(continued from page 79)

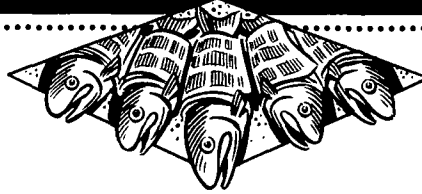
ing her bathtub as foreplay. But it is hardly uproariously funny and only serves to obscure the serious contradiction between the commonness of self-abuse and the transcendent experience Baker tries to make of it, between the solitariness that is part of its nature and the normal sexual desire to share.

At the climax of the novel, the two telephonists piece together a joint fantasy involving a meeting between them that finally ends in real (if the word means anything by this point) sex. But even this ideal meeting is set up by a fantastical device by which the man imagines he can detect a woman masturbating behind closed doors. He envisions using it to detect her in the act and finally allows himself a phantasmal stroll into her hypothetical fantasy. It falls rather flat, I think. After the book's attenuated and preposterous sexual inventions, old-fashioned coitus, even in imagination, has a grossly real feel to it that seems out of place here.

For the masturbatory idyll is the ultimate in "safe sex"—safe not only physically but politically as well and deserving the *Ms.* magazine seal of approval. Or else it is something even more alarming: the last frontier, all other privacies having been long since displayed in public, for those in search of new erotic secrets. In *One Fat Englishman*, Kingsley Amis described what it was that his hero, Roger Micheldene, thought men really wanted, circa 1962, from sexual congress:

A man's sexual aim, he had often said to himself, is to convert a creature who is cool, dry, calm, articulate, independent, purposeful into a creature that is the opposite of these; to demonstrate to an animal which is pretending not to be an animal that it is an animal.

Now that thirty years of the sexual revolution's revelations have worn so threadbare the pretense that we are not animals, perhaps the sexual aim has moved on—to converting hot, wet, agitated, inarticulate, brute, and purposeless rutting into a dream-like, disembodied, unengaged voice that could only be human. □



Cleveland Plain Dealer

Satire? Columnist Phillip Morris at work:

Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas is without question the most dangerous judge in America. . . . Thomas hasn't added a shred of original thought to the court, but he has brought an irrepressible desire to change its constitutional politics. . . . One can only wonder when Thomas will sharpen his knife for something truly meaningful like, say, the 13th Amendment prohibition against slavery.

[March 8, 1992]

Austin American-Statesman

Use of the first person singular is pushed to artistic limits by the learned Bill Porterfield, a columnist famed for writing in the fetal position:

I'll never forget seeing and hearing Gloria Steinem in Dallas on a February day 20 years ago. She spoke at Southern Methodist University, which was comparable to Che Guevara parachuting into Brigadoon. She created a sensation. . . . For perhaps the first time in my life, I felt odd, even a bit guilty, about being a male. . . .

She began speaking, and the words that came from her mouth were beautifully chiseled. . . . One hemorrhaging fool stood to fight her off, and she annihilated him with such cool dispatch. . . .

I and the other fellows spent most of the morning on our knees in the fetal position while Steinem flailed away at our machismo—which she aptly defined as sexual fascism. For all my torture, I heard not one false note from her, and she talked for more than an hour about 5,000 years of male dominance. I told myself I had learned a lesson, and reminded myself not to forget it, forgetting my wife was there as well, separate from me, congregated with her sisters. She would not let me forget it. As I write this, it dawns on me that she had help in keeping me converted even after we divorced. There were two other women in the audience who would also become my wives, one passing on the baton and billy club of rectitude to the other in the relay of our liberation.

[February 26, 1992]

New York Times

What Mr. Oliver Stone sounds like when allowed out in public without his doctors:

In a crowd-pleasing recitation, he went over the experience of working on *JFK*, one that has shaken him so deeply, he said, that he has wondered aloud about the version of American history given in the books he read as a youth.

Disillusionment evidently has been a bitter pill. "I've come to have severe doubts about Columbus," he said, "about Washington, about the civil war being fought over slavery, about World War I, about World War II and the supposed fight against Nazism and Japanese control of resources."

Careering toward a climax, Mr. Stone apparently decided to drive his car right off the cliff. To thrilled applause, he concluded, "I don't even know if I was born or who my parents were."

[March 5, 1992]

New Republic

The Oxford-educated Yale undergraduate mind of Naomi Wolf pursuing the high aesthetic points of slop-pop:

While the rights to vote, be educated, and get equal access to wages and health care all serve as gateways to feminism, the gleaming secret, the unspoken pulse, of feminist commitment is the orgasm. Orgasm is the body's natural call to feminist politics: if being a woman can feel this good, women must be worth something.

I became a feminist because when I was 15, I was given the essential feminist gift: a safe loss of virtue unmarked by social ostracism; an orgasm that was pure heat and light, unshadowed by the specter of death from septicemia on a basement gurney. I became a feminist because a kindly young intern in a white lab coat at Planned Parenthood handed me, with no lectures or questions, a rubber disk and a trial sized tube of gel. No one made me sign a release that it would be used for non-threatening, egalitarian, unphallocentric activity. It—and hence my body—were mine to do with what I pleased. That is feminism, and that's why it's sexy.

[March 16, 1992]

BBC World Service

Mr. Gennady Burbulis, State Secretary of Russia and First Deputy Premier of the Russian Federation, sheds much-needed light on the misty origins of "modern democracy":

And the very existence of Communism in many ways was what stimulated the Western world to harness democratic institutions as a defense against that Communist threat. We were the stimulus to the West to develop modern democracy.

[February 23, 1992]

New York Times

The stupendous Gloria Steinem, at the height of her polemical powers, explaining the superiority of child-rearing techniques in a Communist society or the self-destructiveness of Communist child-rearing techniques, or how feminism won the Cold War, or perhaps she is just drunk as a skunk and no one will tell her to shut up:

Looking at the world as if women mattered, with both eyes open, provides a long overdue depth of understanding of how and why events take place. (For instance, historians are just beginning to relate the otherwise mysterious democratic movements of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union to the growth of less violent and less authoritarian child-rearing.)

[March 13, 1992]

Washington Post

Someone by the name of Andrew Ward speaks of his unhappy daughter Casey with nincompoop pride:

Still I didn't know what Casey would make of Gloria Steinem. . . . The press has characterized Ms. Steinem's new book as an apology for activist feminism and a confession of personal exhaustion. But she seemed neither apologetic nor exhausted as the congregation greeted her with a standing ovation.

She got things off to an unsettling start by likening the layout of a church to a woman's reproductive organs. I guess you

had to have been there, but it was the way of saying that one purpose of Western religion was to lay patriarchal claim to the miracle of birth.

As she talked I considered the state of the patriarchy in my household. In our family the wife is credentialed, employed and hooked into the system, whereas the husband has a high school diploma and improvises a freelance vocation at home during his children's school hours. I have never had nor made as much money as my wife.

So when Steinem said, "Them what eats can also cook," and, "We've shown that women can do what men can do, now we must show that men can do what women can do," I figured she never laid a glove on me.

And yet, Ms. Steinem's oration on self-esteem and the enduring effects of child abuse electrified my daughter, and when the time came for questions Casey rose to speak. She informed the audience of 1,300 that she was 12 years old and wanted them to know that girls her age needed more strong feminist role models outside school.

"Like maybe even feminist girl scouts?" she suggested with a laugh, and everyone beamed and applauded, including Ms. Steinem.

Maybe Casey was just hamming it up, but I was grateful to Steinem for providing Casey with some external affirmation of the feminism we practice so reflexively at home, as we pushed our way out of the birth canal of the First United Methodist Church.

[February 25, 1992]

The Great Books Series

More palmary stupidity from Dr. Paul Ehrlich, almost always wrong:

People have said to me, "If we practice contraception, we are lowering ourselves to the level of the animals." I find that an amusing view. I always ask them which particular animals they have seen recently using contraception. Almost by definition, the only single thing that people do that no other animal does, is to practice contraception. It is a widespread behavior in human beings. Other animals use tools. Bees and wasps use tools. Chimpanzees use tools. Chimpanzees are capable of quite conceptual thoughts, problem solving, and so on. But no chimp has ever been seen to grab a condom and use it properly. So condom use is one of our most human characteristics, and that is cheering.

[from *Environment in Peril*, edited by Anthony B. Wolbarst, Smithsonian Institution Press, 233 pages, \$19.95 paper]

Whole Earth Review

Solemn declarations from Mr. Charles Walters (or Walter Charles, could be, what's the diff?) in a leading ideological organ:

Two systems of weed control are before the world. One looks to the annihilation of species and varieties with killer technology. The other suggests a natural balance with energized crops protecting themselves against uneconomic weed competition. One accepts a byproduct of instant death, lingering illness and a cancerous legacy. . . . One system delivers to farmers pauperism, ignorance, depopulation and barbarism. The other increases wealth, intelligence, and civilization.

[Summer 1991]

Spy

Inscrutable adventures of a girl and her pheasant as chronicled in a leading Manhattan journal of *belles lettres* and bravado:

The clerk reached into the pheasants' cage, grabbed the nearest bird by the feet and held it, writhing and squawking, out to me. "No! *Muerto! Muerto!*" my driver exclaimed. Turning to me, he added, "You want it dead, right?"

Yes, I wanted it dead. Or rather, I didn't, but wasn't that the point of this exercise?

Now, I understand that the concept of feeling violated as you watch someone kill a pheasant for you, particularly when you're carrying a bag of Swiss chocolates, is ludicrous. So I have no right to feel upset about the man in the back of the store. Staring meaningfully into my eyes, he held up my beautiful pheasant—by now the bird had become my pet in the same way that the taxi driver had become my husband—and drew the knife slowly across its throat as slowly as one *can* draw a knife across a pheasant's throat. Then he dropped the bird into a trash can and watched me watch it flap and struggle until it died.

There isn't much else to tell. The dead bird went next into a vat of hot water, then into the poultry equivalent of a spin cycle, to emerge looking as innocuous as any plucked chicken you buy in the store.

My taxi driver got a 100 percent tip. "How are you going to cook your bird?" he asked. "In some kind of wine sauce," I lied. I knew I was going to throw it out the first chance I got.

I spent the afternoon in a fit of self-loathing that was only made worse by the fact that every time I opened my briefcase I found a dead pheasant in it. When I put out birdseed now, I feel like a double agent.

[October 1991]

New York Review of Books

Authoress Joyce Carol Oates experimenting with stream-of-consciousness prose or perhaps illicit drugs on the otherwise staid pages of *NYRB*:

Boxing is only possible if there is an endless supply of young men hungry to leave their impoverished ghetto neighborhoods, more than willing to substitute the putative dangers of the ring for the more evident, possibly daily, dangers of the street; yet, it is rarely advanced as a means of eradicating boxing that poverty itself be abolished; that it is the social conditions feeding boxing that are obscene. The pious hypocrisy of Caucasian moralists vis-à-vis the sport that has become almost exclusively the province of black and ethnic minorities has its analogue in a classic statement of President Bush's some months ago, that he is worried about the amount of "filth" flooding America by way of televised hearings and trials; not that the Clarence Thomas-Anita Hill hearing and the William Kennedy Smith rape trial revealed "filth" at the core of certain male-female relations in our society, but the public airing of such, the very hearings and trials, are the problem. Ban the spectacle, and the obscenity will cease to exist.

[February 13, 1992]

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